A Weekend Away ... inside Valley Scene

VALLEY VOICE

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Dead trees in Crescent Meadow. Catherine Doe/Valley Voice

Tulare County Declares State of Emergency on Tree Mortality

Catherine Doe

At the October 6 Tulare County Board of Supervisors meeting, the board voted to declare a local emergency due to widespread and increasing tree mortality in Tulare County. The vote was taken at the request of officials in Fresno, Mariposa, Madera and Tuolumne, who asked Tulare County to join them in their declaration.

The combined declaration of the five counties might force the federal government to remove dead and dying trees from the Sierra Nevada Mountains. A recent survey by the US Forest Service showed that most of the dead trees in the Sierra were dying due to severe drought conditions and beetle infestations, aggravated by the lack of water, weakening the trees.

Tree mortality contributes to uncontrollable forest fires that cause property damage, pollute the air and create casualties. Supervisor Allen Ishida pointed out that during the Rough Fire the air was so bad that it looked like a foggy day in Fresno.

According to a Tulare County document, Cal Fire Reports more than 300,000 acres burned statewide just this year--an 89% increase from last year. Evacuations were issued during the height of the Rough Fire, which burned through two counties' national forest land. The San Joaquin Air Pollution Control District issued an air alert on September 9, which is called when conditions may lead to ozone formation that can result in exceeding health-based ozone standard. Schools and recreational programs were

EMERGENCY continued on **11 »**

County Officials Mum as Mooney Grove Complaints Continue

Dave Adalian

The state of Mooney Grove Park seems to have become a hot potato no one in county government wants to handle for fear of being burned.

The number of public complaints about the declining state of the county-maintained park - where benches lie broken, ponds are choked with decay, and trees are dying, if not already dead, from lack of water - has grown steadily for months while the park continues to go downhill.

In May, the board of supervisors formed the Tulare County Parks Advisory Committee to assess the situation at Mooney Grove and the state of the county's nine other parks. While the body has held its first meeting, repeated requests for interviews with those who can make changes at Mooney Grove, have gone unanswered.

"What we're looking for is their recommendations," Steve Worthley, chairman of the board of supervisors about the TCPAC. "Frankly, our parks have been ignored by the county."

They continue to be. Repeated requests over two weeks for interviews with the county's park manager Neil Pilegard, interim General Services Director John Hess, Mooney Grove Museum curator Amy King, who is a member of the Parks Advisory Committee, and Supervisor Phil Cox all went unanswered.

PARKS continued on **10 »**

Tulare, Visalia Sue to Force Cleanup

Dave Adalian

The City of Tulare and the Cal Water Company say a group of chemical manufacturers spent decades contaminating local groundwater with a dangerous, cancer-causing pollutant, and now they're looking to make the alleged polluters clean up their mess.

Lawyers for the City of Tulare could be in court as soon as February 8 to take on Dow Chemical and Shell Oil, the two main defendants in a series of lawsuits accusing them of spreading the chemical TCP by hiding it in pesticides widely used throughout the Central Valley. According to a summary of the case filed by attorneys for the city, Dow, Shell and others are accused of having "knowingly and willfully manufactured, promoted and sold TCP and products containing TCP when they knew or reasonably should have known that this harmful compound would reach groundwater, pollute drinking water supplies, render drinking water unusable and unsafe, and threaten the public health and welfare. ..."

Wide-Spread Contamination

TCP, or 1, 2, 3-trichloropropane, has been discovered in 372 wells throughout the state, including 43 in Tulare County, 56 in Fresno County and 111 in Kern County, according to the State Water Resources Control Board. The chemical has been shown in animal models to cause increased rates of liver and kidney damage, and cancer. The water board has established a notification level of 0.05 micrograms per liter -- equivalent to five parts per trillion -- for the pollutant, which is now recognized as a carcinogen by the state.

According to Todd Robins, an attorney for Tulare, at least 13 wells in the city's drinking-water system have tested positive for excessive levels of TCP. And, Robins said, the companies that made and sold the product knew it did not work.

"It's was a completely unnecessary ingredient in the product," he said. "It's a very persistent and mobile contaminant that really gets deep down in to aquifers."

Farmers Misled

Growers who were sold the contaminant, used as a pesticide to treat nematodes, tiny worms that attack crops, had no idea the TCP was present, and they used it liberally.

"We have evidence of use all over the place in the '70s and '80s," Robins said. "The farmers were innocent. They weren't told the (TCP) was in there."

The other lawsuit nearing its day in court involves the Cal Water Company, supplier of drinking water to Visalia and other areas in the Central Valley including the City of Bakersfield. That suit has been pending for more than a decade, and has finally come to the front of a line of dozens of similar cases all being adjudicated in San Bernardino County.

"There are approximately 100 wells involved throughout the Central Valley area we're proceeding on, approximately 15 are in the Visalia area," said Robert Chapman, attorney for Cal Water. "The majority of cases ahead of ours have settled shortly before trial. Our case is much bigger than those cases. We are proceeding as if we are going to trial."

It could be another two years, Chapman said, before the case comes to trial. Pending cases against the same defendants have been brought by the Woodville Public Utilities District, the Ivanhoe PUD, the London Community Service District, the Orosi PUD, Traver Water, the Earlimart PUD and several water suppliers in Fresno County, including Clovis and Fresno.

Cleaning up the Mess

In both of the ongoing cases, plaintiffs are suing to force the companies they say are responsible to pay for the cost of cleanup. Listed in the Tulare case as defendants are Dow Chemical, Dow Agrosciences, Shell Oil, Shell Chemical, Occidental Chemical, Wilbur Ellis Company, J.R. Simplot Company and FMC Corporation.

CLEANUP continued on **16 »**

Tulare County Joins JPA

Catherine Doe

The Tulare County Board of Supervisors voted at their October 6 meeting to join with Fresno, Madera, Merced, and Kings Counties to form a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) to apply for water bond money to build Temperance Flat Dam. The JPA will ultimately have 11 members including two from Valley cities, members from two irrigation districts, a member from a tribal council and one member at-large.

Initially, Fresno County--the proposed site of Temperance Flat Dam--only wanted counties to be members of the JPA, keeping it to a manageable five participants. Mario Santayo, of the California Clean Water Coalition, said that forming a diverse JPA is critical, and water commissioners want to see

JPA continued on **4 »**

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FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

Not an Enjoyable Spectacle

It's October again, and time for something that has become a tradition in our family--my weeklong bachelorhood. I can't say I enjoy it--because I love my wife--but knowing she and our daughters are off having fun alleviates any devastation here on the home front. They send me pictures. It's quiet. And I get to watch more sports on our one television than I'd otherwise have a right to.

Even if it sickens me.

I don't know if I can watch the remainder of the NLDS between the Los Angeles Dodgers and the New York Mets. I grew up a San Francisco Giants fan, so from my perspective the Dodgers are a soulless roster of high-paid prima donnas. Not a team at all, but a collection of very self-interested individuals.

Chase Utley's slide into Mets shortstop Ruben Tejada--not into second base, he clearly was unconcerned with that--in the seventh inning of Game 2 verged on the criminal. It broke Tejada's right leg and, if there were any justice at all in the world, should have knocked half of Utley's teeth out. So unconcerned was Utley with second base that he never bothered to touch it, and left the field immediately after being called out. He was solely trying to break-up a double play, and in the heat of that moment not only was not in the base path but slid after the bag and purposefully into Tejada.

The Dodgers are lucky I was not umpiring the game--I'd have called a double play and ejected Utley. The proper thing for him to have done is to have slid either over or to the side of second base, disrupting Tejada's attempt to relay the ball to first. Here's the rule:

MLB RULE 6.01

"If, in the judgment of the umpire, a base runner willfully and deliberately interferes with a batted ball or a fielder in the act of fielding a batted ball with the obvious intent to break up a double play, the ball is dead. The umpire shall call the runner out for interference and also call out the batter-runner because of the action of his teammate. In no event may bases be run or runs scored because of such action by a runner."

Yet Utley was both out of the base path and beyond the bag when he assaulted Tejada. Yes--assaulted. I don't think it was Utley's intention to actually hurt Tejada--although he did go out of his way to plow into him; Tejada had become inhuman, certainly not a fellow player, rather something Utley had to destroy. But neither do I think he should have been awarded second base after replays showed that Tejada had just barely missed toeing it.

What was missed was the call.

Why--having left the field, on his own, without ever touching second base--could Utley not have been called out on appeal, as a home run hitter who, in his trot, missed second bas might be?

I was fairly certain of the reception he would have met when the series moved to Citi Field in New York. Quite properly, the fans there would have left Utley in no doubt as to where he stood with them. That is until Sunday night, less than 24 hours after the incident, when MLB chief baseball officer Joe Torre issued Utley a suspension for the two Citi Field games. But if the teams split those, the series would then conclude in Los Angeles.

The questions now are: Why call a suspension after the fact if the on-field play was deemed hunky-dory? And Will Utley be eligible in LA?

Even in college football, what Utley did would be called targeting--the leveling of a defenseless player--and would have resulted in his removal from the game. In fact, Major League Baseball instituted new measures--2014's Rule 7.13--that prohibit a base runner from separating the player covering the plate and the ball. A runner, in other words, can no longer level the catcher or any other player covering the plate in the time-honored attempt to dislodge the ball when a tag is applied. The runner's focus is to be limited to the base.

It's time to apply Rule 7.13 to the pivot man at second base. I have played catcher and--although I likely was the worst in baseball history--can attest to the invulnerability one feels behind the mask, padding and shin guards. Not once did I feel skittish applying a tag to someone charging me from third base.

The pivot man on a double play, of course, has no such armor. And it's not an enjoyable spectacle to see him destroyed.

— Joseph Oldenbourg

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Political Fix

Catherine Doe

Can You Smell the Reefer Yet?

When Californians vote to legalize marijuana in November of 2016, which seems likely happen, pot will be legal up and down the entire West Coast, including Alaska. But California is the biggest prize of 2016. A victory in California could possibly portend the beginning of the end of the criminalization of pot throughout the country. Although 56% of Californians support the legalization of pot, according to the Public Policy Institute of California, there are still many dissenters, most of them sitting right here on the Tulare County Supervisors' dais.

Right now, five initiatives to legalize marijuana are in the process of gathering signatures. Of the five initiatives vying to get on the ballot, the one most likely to succeed has a provision for local control, meaning our supervisors can decide if the growing, selling and consuming of pot will be legal on county lands. That prospect is a little scary, but has its advantages.

Tulare County Supervisors have discussed making Tulare County a "dry state."

I'm not sure how wise it is to criminalize smoking pot, but I don't feel the same about its cultivation. One of the possible provisions of the new law will be similar to alcohol: Businesses that sell or distribute marijuana will not be able to grow it. That is a position that the Tulare County Supervisors may want to consider.

We already give up most of our water so farmers can feed the world. Do we really want to give up the rest of our water to irrigate pot fields so that some spoiled brat in Marin County can get stoned on a highway pull-out sitting in his Jag while looking over the Golden Gate Bridge? I don't think so.

Maybe the smart thing to do is ban the cultivation of pot in our county and let Marin County, with their 3.3% unemployment rate and their $133,000 medium income, waste their water, ruin their environment, and raise their crime rates to grow their own pot. Why should we grow pot? Anyone in Tulare County who wants it will still be able to legally buy it.

So the next time Marinites want to light up a spliff in their plein-air hot tub, let the pot come from their neck of the woods. Let them grow their own pot in a clearing in the redwood forest instead of our Sequoia National Park or our drought-ridden Valley floor.

Let's Get Politicized

When Republicans scolded President Obama for politicizing the mass shooting in Oregon, this is what he had to say.

"This is something we should politicize."

He went on to say, "the notion that gun laws don't work is not borne out by the evidence." Reducing the frequency of mass shootings is merely "a political choice that we make to allow this to happen every few months. We collectively are answerable to those families who lose their loved ones because of their (lawmakers) inaction."

President Obama's reaction to the mass shooting was to go to Umpqua, to try one more time to inspire congress to pass a meaningful gun control law.

Jeb Bush's reaction to the Oregon shooting was "stuff happens." Ben Carson said, "I never saw a body with bullet holes that was more devastating than taking the right to arm ourselves away."

Other Republican reactions were to continue politicizing the deaths of four Americans in Benghazi while accusing President Obama of politicizing mass shootings in Oregon.

Donald Trump blamed mental illness for the carnage in Oregon last week. "This isn't guns, this is about mental illness," he said on ABC's *This Week*. "You have sick people in this country and throughout the world, and you're always going to have difficulty." So according to Trump there should be just as many gun related deaths in England as in the United States because they have the same number of mental health problems. Right?

Wrong. The answer is pretty simple. The US is an outlier on gun violence because it has exponentially more guns than other developed nation. Whereas 33,636 Americans were killed by guns in 2013, in England there were 290 gun related deaths, according to vox.com.

When economist Richard Florida took a look at gun deaths and other social indicators, he found that higher populations, more stress, more immigrants, and more mental illness didn't correlate with more gun deaths. But he did find one telling correlation: States with tighter gun control laws have fewer gun-related deaths.

The following are statistics and statements mostly compiled by the website vox.com.

For 2015 there have already been 247 mass shootings in 238 days. Some days there were none and some days there were multiple mass shootings. A mass shooting is when at least four people were shot in one day by one shooter.

Whenever a mass shooting occurs, supporters of gun rights argue that it's inappropriate to bring up political debates about gun control in the aftermath of a tragedy.

For example, Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal, a strong supporter of gun rights, criticized President Obama for "trying to score cheap political points" when the president mentioned gun control after a mass shooting in Charleston, South Carolina.

It will *never* be the right time to discuss mass shootings. America has nearly one mass shooting a day. But if lawmakers are forced to wait for a time when there isn't a mass shooting to talk about gun control, that will never happen. Of course, that's exactly what the pro-NRA Republicans want.

States with more guns tend to have far more gun deaths. And it's not just one study. "Within the United States, a wide array of empirical evidence indicates that more guns in a community leads to more homicide," David Hemenway, the Harvard Injury Control Research Center's director, wrote in *Private Guns, Public Health*.

Given that states with more guns tend to have more homicides, it isn't too surprising that, as a study in the *American Journal of Public Health* found, states with more guns also have more cops die in the line of duty.

Researchers looked at federal data for firearm ownership and the homicides of police officers across the US over 15 years. They found that states with more gun ownership had more cops killed: Every 10% increase in firearm ownership correlated with 10 additional officers killed in homicides over the 15-year study period.

President Obama said, "In the coming days we will learn about the victims. The young men and women who were studying and learning and working hard, their eyes set on the future, their dreams, on what they could make of their lives. And America will wrap everyone who is grieving with our prayers and our love."

Well, "thoughts and prayers" aren't going to stop the massive number of gun deaths in the United States or protect our children. In December 2012, a gunman walked into Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, and killed 20 children, six adults, and himself. Since then, there have been at least 986 mass shootings, with shooters killing at least 1,234 people and wounding 3,565 more.

"May God bless the memories of those who were killed today. May He bring comfort to their families and courage to the injured as they fight their way back. And may He give us the strength to come together and find the courage to

POLITICAL FIX continued on **4 »**

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JPA

Continued from p. 1

disadvantaged communities, tribal councils and water agencies participate in the process and benefit from bond money.

A $7.545 billion dollar water bond was passed in November of 2014, with 64% of the electorate in favor. The funds are to be spent on water quality, supply, treatment, and storage projects. The California Water Commission has been designated to allocate the bond money and seats several Central Valley members, including Maria Herrera of Visalia. Although more than 100 projects have expressed an interest in building storage, only $2.7 of the original $7.5 billion has been allocated for underground storage facilities like Kern County's water bank, or above ground storage such as new dams.

The bond money does not necessarily go to the most deserving water projects, but to those which are best organized. Organizations are already on a tight time line as JPA's are expected to have been organized and functioning. Sites Reservoir, north of the delta, Temperance Flat Dam's largest competitor, is ahead of the South Valley in terms of an organized and functioning JPA, and has already started putting together their bid for the money.

The Sites Reservoir JPA started organizing four years ago when the passage of a water bond was far in the future but imminent nonetheless. Because of the nature of the state and level of organization needed, the Bureau of Reclamation feared that San Francisco and Los Angeles would receive most of the money. Sites Reservoir is considered Northern California.

It is projected that Sites Reservoir and Temperance Flat Dam will need $3 billion each to be completed, so money received from the bond will just be the beginning.

Temperance Flat Dam is projected to be built in Fresno County on the San Joaquin River above Friant Dam on Millerton Lake and will add a million acre-feet of storage. Santoyo said, 50% of that water will benefit Tulare County. The water for Sites Reservoir would be diverted from the Sacramento River at Red Bluff and flow into the reservoir through the Tehama-Colusa Canal and canals in the Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District. Sites would hold up to 1.8 million acre-feet of water from the Sacramento River.

The board of supervisors anticipates potential changes to the agreement, but approved the JPA to get the process going. Fresno County has already approved the agreement, while Merced, Kings and Madera counties are still reviewing it. Once all counties approve of the initial JPA, the plan is to develop by-laws and appoint the remaining members.

The JPA will be referred to as the San Joaquin Valley Water Infrastructure Authority.

Political Fix

Continued from p. 3

change," President Obama said.

And Finally……

With all of the hype surrounding former Tulare Police Chief Jerry Breckinridge, I thought I would give the story behind the story.

After reading the 60-plus comments written on our website concerning the article about the Tulare Police Chief, it is evident that this information has been circulating around the county for months, and that the *Valley Voice* didn't report anything new. This was also confirmed by Tulare Vice-Mayor Carlton Jones, who wrote, "as a citizen I think Jerry made a huge mistake and it's being swept under the rug, I think other officers know the truth."

As for the anonymous sources, Chris and Pat could be men or women, and could have been present or not at the incidents involving Mr. Breckinridge. What I can say for sure is that they both have extensive knowledge about law enforcement. The two other sources I used to write the article were character references who verified that Chris and Pat were who they said they were.

As far as the content of the article, I could have written more. I held back information to protect my sources and I withheld information that was juicy but not entirely relevant to the story.

Here are a few other things we all know about this case and that I will say out loud. First, when someone is "finally" caught drunk driving, that means they have been doing it for a long time. The same is probably true about the domestic abuse arrest. Second, if this had been you or me, our asses would have been hauled off to jail. Third, if the city manager, Don Dorman, had handled the situation appropriately, there would have been no story. Fourth, if Tulare had a vibrant, active daily newspaper, Mr. Dorman might have acted appropriately.

Lastly, Mr. Breckinridge's resignation isn't the end of his career. It is just the beginning – depending on him. If Mr. Breckinridge comes out the other end of this difficult time in his life recovered and able, he could be the head of a police force much larger than Tulare's.

Most of our intelligent *Valley Voice* readers disagreed with the few commenters who said, "this is a personal matter."

If your neighbor is arrested for domestic abuse or drunk driving, that's a personal matter. When a public figure has disappeared for months without an explanation, and is still being paid, that's a public matter.

When a city employee is put on paid administrative leave, it likely means some sort of misconduct took place and an investigation is in the works. If Mr. Breckinridge wanted to keep whatever happened and the ensuing investigation private, he should have resigned immediately. If he wants to stay absent on the taxpayers' nickel, then the city manager has to explain why.

What happened to the Tulare Police Chief is our right to know and whether the Tulare City Council or the city staff has finally gotten that message is uncertain. But given that, now it's time for them to cough up what happened to Tulare Deputy City Manager Margee Fallert. She has been "absent" since April while collecting monthly salary of $11,200.

In conclusion, Vice-Mayor Jones asked a *Valley Voice* reader, "out of every paper, news channel and radio. Why do you think VV was the only outlet these invisible 4 went to?"

That leads me to why I wrote the story. I wrote the story because it is news. I wrote the story because when Mr. Dorman explains the situation only by stating that their police chief is "unavailable," it is an injustice to the citizens of Tulare. To answer Mr. Jones question, the sources came to the *Valley Voice* because they knew we would do our job and print the story.

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Real Estate

Mortgages: When Is The Best Time to Shop?

Nancy Vigran

Buying a house and taking out a mortgage is, with little doubt, one of the largest financial decisions in many people's lives. After all, it is the largest singular expense most families face in a lifetime.

Deciding when to buy, or whether to, and when to refinance, is all part of a lifetime financial plan.

Markets change, individual situations change, as does the US and worldwide financial picture. Thus, it is important to discuss all the possibilities with an experienced professional.

The US, California and more specifically the Valley suffered a major housing market shift several years ago with lenders offering what normally would be elusive loans and larger mortgages to those who really did not qualify. The result is still being felt today with foreclosures and quick sales still in effect.

Mortgage rates, like interest rates, fell and remain quite low today.

"According to Freddie Mac, 30-year mortgage rates are 3.89% on average in September, compared with nearly 5.77% a decade ago," said Rilian Ball, president of First Capital Group in Visalia. "If you already locked in a mortgage at the ultra-low rates that have prevailed over the past several years, you were very smart."

Daily, mortgage specialists are asked to predict the future. While this obviously just is not possible, a mortgage broker is trained to follow patterns in hopes of obtaining knowledge for his or her clients.

"Forecasting mortgage rates is as difficult as predicting weather," Ball said. "In general, seasoned mortgage professionals have an understanding of the various fronts and patterns that create rate changes, but no one really knows what's going to happen in the future."

There are several different types of loans available in California including convention loans of 15 or 30 years at a fixed rate, or adjustable rate; federal government loans, also available in 15- or 30-year periods, offered by the Federal Housing Administration, or fixed-rate mortgages offered by the Veterans Administration; and special incentive loans offered to Californians with low (or even "moderate") incomes through various state and local housing departments, such as the California Housing Finance Agency.

The rate for any type of loan may vary according not only to the type of loan, but loan-to-value ratio as well, Ball said.

Current rates are actually lower than they have been all year, he added.

"The main factors that influence the Fed decision to raise rates are employment and inflation," Ball said.

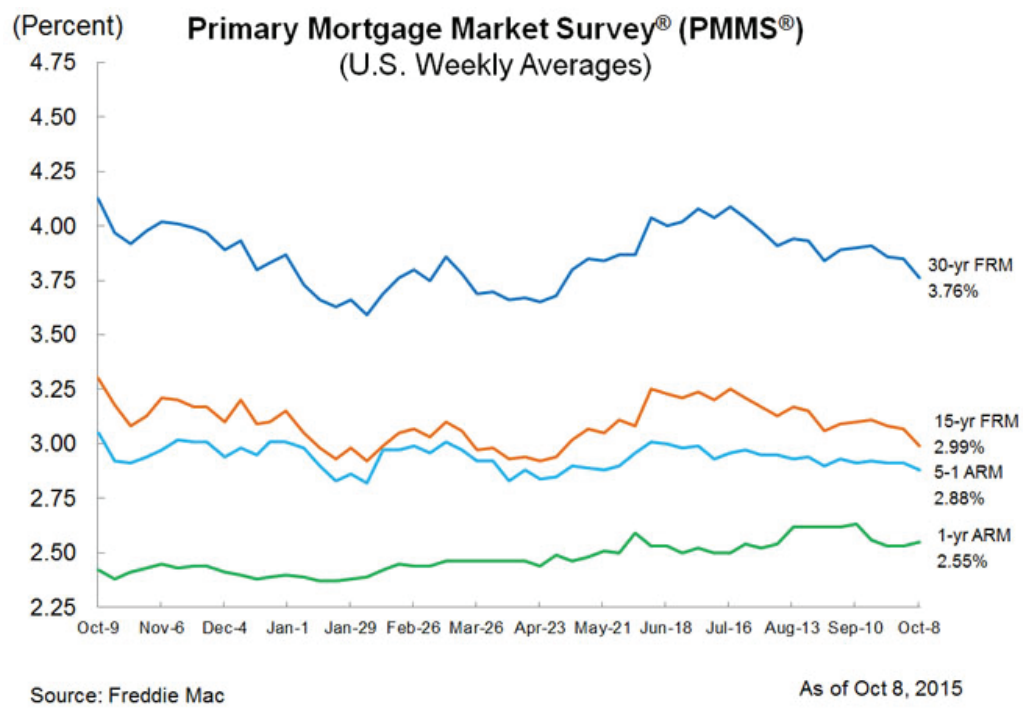
"Fortunately, the Federal Reserve has made it very clear that it desires to raise short term interest rates," he added. "Therefore, it's easy to predict higher rates in the future."

Although it does not appear that an immediate rate increase will be too terribly high, further in the future it could be.

"My guess is that rates will initially rise .500 to .750% rather quickly from their current levels once the Fed announces the increase," Ball said. "Assuming a $200,000 loan, 2016 homeowners could be paying $58 to $88 more a month. Fortunately, it should be a slow and bumpy ride before we see rates back in the 6-8% range that we saw in the early 2000's. That would be a $258 to $527 monthly increase on the same $200,000 loan."

The "slow and bumpy ride" takes into account that the US is heading into a presidential election year.

"Typically rates stay steady in election years," Ball added.



With so much going on in the federal government and around the world, "we're just in a volitle economy right now," Ball said.

It is difficult to predict where the economy, interest rates and mortgage rates will go.

Of course, the best time to buy a home is when an individual or family are ready, financially and emotionally. Determining the best mortgage is between the investor and their lender. Do not be afraid to shop around. And remember, while signing a long-term loan, the opportunity to refinance remains a possibility for the future.

Ball offers the following links as good mortgage/housing information sources:

Freddie Mac Average Interest Rates
http://www.freddiemac.com/pmms/pmms30.htm

Fannie Mae Consumer Research and Analysis:
http://www.fanniemae.com/portal/research-and-analysis/consumer-research-analysis.html

Mortgage News Daily:
http://www.mortgagenewsdaily.com/

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Agriculture

Groundwater: Resource Remains Vast, Difficult to Define Fully

Kate Campbell, CFBF

It's a vital California resource, but groundwater isn't easily understood—and during the state's four-year drought, as groundwater pumping has increased in response to reduced surface supplies, it has been the subject of sometimes-alarming, but not necessarily accurate, public statements about the health of the resource.

The drought has focused attention on groundwater and newly adopted laws aim to ensure the resource is sustainably managed. But water experts say gaps remain in scientific understanding of subsurface water supplies.

There's general agreement by water experts that during an average year, the resource provides about 30 percent of the water needed for farms, families and the state's economy. During dry spells, that proportion increases to more than 60 percent.

Certain areas of the state have no groundwater and others rely on it completely. Some groundwater lies near the surface; other sources are thousands of feet deep.

There are declining groundwater levels and areas where land has subsided as water has been withdrawn.

But Tim Quinn, executive director of the Association of California Water Agencies, dismisses the notion that the state might be running out of groundwater.

"We have hundreds of millions of acre-feet of groundwater under our feet in California," Quinn said.

Past estimates of just how much water is stored underground ranged from 850 million acre-feet to 1.3 billion acre-feet. By comparison, the six main reservoirs in the federal Central Valley Project can hold a combined 11.8 million acre-feet.

"The system is not broken just because a lot of groundwater is being pumped right now," Quinn said. "Instead, we're in the middle of a horrific natural disaster and, to survive these immediate circumstances, farmers and cities have turned to groundwater."

Over the long term, Quinn said groundwater needs to be protected, "to ensure it's available when dry years come again."

Given the severity of the current drought, the U.S. Geological Survey said it found many Central Valley wells are at or below historic water levels. Subsidence in some areas of the San Joaquin Valley has resulted in land surface declines during the past couple of years.

"The groundwater storage capacity of an individual basin or within the entire state is one of the questions most frequently asked by private citizens, water resource planners and politicians alike," authors of the State Water Plan wrote in an update to the plan.

Answering the question isn't easy, because information is complex and there's still much that's unknown about groundwater resources, said hydrogeologist Todd Kincaid of Reno-based Geo-Hydros, a consulting firm specializing in geological and hydrological modeling.

He said technology used for modeling relies on data from multiple sources—sometimes old paper reports, spreadsheets and maps, as well as the latest satellite images and geophysical exploration technology adapted from oil and gas exploration.

Once data are pulled together, Kincaid and his team use computer analysis to create three-dimensional models designed to "see" underground structures and understand subterranean water movement. Some basins are well understood, he said, whereas information for others is incomplete or nonexistent.

Although determining total underground storage capacity is still evolving, hydrologists agree with estimates that conclude capacity stands in the hundreds of millions of acre-feet, at least, though not all of that groundwater would be usable.

It's generally agreed the largest groundwater reservoirs are found in the Central Valley—spanning more than 400 miles underground through the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys. The majority of the supply arrives as runoff that seeps into the aquifers. Depending on surface hydrology and soil types, some aquifers recharge faster than others.

Following passage last year of new laws known as the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, or SGMA, the state has ranked groundwater basins to identify those most compromised or heavily used, to allow for targeted funding and more rigorous management, said Jack Rice, California Farm Bureau Federation associate counsel, noting 21 basins and sub-basins have been identified as "significantly overdrafted."

"Population and growth, the number of wells, irrigated acreage, groundwater use in total and percent of total supply are part of the categories that are used to rank basins experiencing problems," Rice said.

The state Department of Water Resources will release a final list of critically overdrafted basins in coming days. Those basins will need to have groundwater sustainability plans in place by Jan. 31, 2020, two years earlier than other high- and medium-priority basins.

"It's extremely important for farmers and ranchers who rely on groundwater to get involved with implementation of SGMA," said Danny Merkley, CFBF water resources director. "Part of that involvement will require some understanding of groundwater as a natural resource."

Although SGMA will focus on stabilizing and managing groundwater, Merkley said, "the real solution to water supply stability is to build more

GROUNDWATER continued on **7 »**

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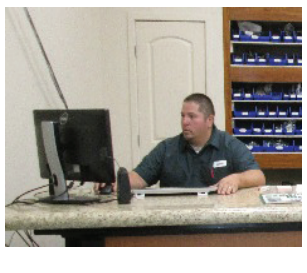

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Agriculture

Local Groundwater Planning Efforts Move Forward

Tricia Stever Blattler
Executive Director
Tulare County Farm Bureau

The impact of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) is being felt locally as stakeholders, water storage and irrigation districts, county leadership and other water experts in the region meet to discuss the new state law's directives. Plans are being assembled for each sub-basin in the Tulare Lake Basin hydrologic region.

As one can imagine, the impact of these new laws touch all of us, but particularly agriculture. Agriculture represents more than 25% of the employment in the region, and generates a multiplier effect of $3 for every $1 generated by the farm economy. Water is the lifeblood of our irrigated agriculture industry here, and the Tulare County Farm Bureau is actively engaged as the SGMA laws become reality.

In Tulare County the three sub-basins continue with various planning efforts. Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA) must be locally formed by qualified public entities by July, 2017. Once formed and approved by the state, each agency must locally fund and implement a study to build a groundwater sustainability plan that provides a 25-year planning framework for achieving sustainability in the groundwater basin. These agencies will regulate essentially all groundwater pumping in the basin.

The Kings River eastern sub-basin, encompassing mostly the Alta Irrigation District's service area in north Tulare County, remains committed to moving forward with an memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the 14 public entities that are collaborating on forming a GSA. The Farm Bureau, along with a number of other stakeholders, has engaged in monthly meetings hosted by Alta to discuss and deliberate over the details.

AB 1135 was authored by Assembly Member Henry T. Perea to create a special act district which would form a seven-member voting board, and dedicate one board seat to an agriculture representative. AB 1135 was turned into a two-year bill this past July, to give all stakeholders time to work out the finer details.

In the Kaweah sub-basin, which encompasses most of the central part of Tulare County, one GSA has already formed, with a joint powers agreement (JPA)signed by the cities of Visalia and Tulare, and the Tulare Irrigation District. Known as the Mid-Kaweah GSA, it hosted its first JPA board meeting last month, and will hold subsequent monthly meetings on the second Tuesday of the month at 3 pm at the Tulare Public Library in the Council Chambers. The GSA meetings are open to the public.

Other Kaweah planning efforts are emerging, with an expected announcement that the County of Tulare and the Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District will also be coordinating a joint GSA with other eligible entities to cover the remaining service area in the Kaweah sub-basin. This is positive news, as a number of land owners in white areas -- areas of land for which no specific planning proposals have been adopted -- of the Kaweah sub-basin may not have an entity that could form a GSA and a coordinating GSA between the County and KDWCD will potentially cover all the gaps in the remainder of the sub-basin.

Essentially this would avoid allowing the state to be able to come in and declare a white area to be probationary and out of compliance.

To the south end of the county, the Tule sub-basin is also undergoing numerous discussions being coordinated by leaders throughout the south county. The Tule sub-basin has formed a number of stakeholder groups to identify which entities will be applying to form a GSA prior to the July, 2017 deadline.

The Farm Bureau has been actively monitoring these discussions, and helping convene discussions amongst stakeholders in the county on a variety of water-related topics. The Farm Bureau's goal is to help bring together the voice of agriculture to these meetings and make sure that farmers are represented at the table as these important groundwater regulations are being formed and agencies created that will have long term impact on groundwater pumping and usage in the basin.

Anyone that would like to learn more about SGMA is also encouraged to attend the public forum on Thursday, October 22 in Visalia, at the Assembly Hall at Cafe 210, at 210 W. Center Avenue, 6-8 pm, to learn more about how the SGMA process is being implemented. This meeting is geared to the public to learn the basics of how the laws were created, and how the SGMA process will work.

Learn more at: http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/

"Drill for Will" Project for Well Deepening Reaches Out to Visalians

Trudy Wischemann

Paul Buxman, Tulare County's premier agricultural landscape artist-in-residence, has launched a rescue effort for Fresno County farmer Will Scott, Jr. Scott is a small-scale, organic Black farmer who has organized other Black farmers for mutual support, aided young people in getting back to the land, and produced healthy food once common in rural Black diets for sale at farmers markets in Fresno and Oakland (visit his website, www.scottfamilyfarms.net, to see some of these efforts.)

But Will Scott, Jr.'s wells are going dry. This year he was able to farm only 5 of his 45 acres, and unless he can deepen his wells this winter, he will be out of business. Scott was featured as one of the "Faces of the Drought," where he was quoted as saying simply "We're on the verge of losing a lot."

When Paul Buxman heard of Will Scott's plight, however, he was catapulted into action. "The community cannot afford to lose this man," he said in his first interview with Dale Yurong of Channel 30 Action News. Having much in common with Scott – small-scale organic farming, farm organizing, and deep faith that translates into community activism – Buxman recognized

DRILL continued on **16 »**

Groundwater

Continued from p. 6

surface water storage. With adequate surface water supplies, the need to go to groundwater can be greatly reduced."

Online updates on groundwater and developments related to SGMA can be found online at www.water.ca.gov/groundwater.

(Kate Campbell is an assistant editor of Ag Alert. She may be contacted at kcampbell@cfbf.com.)

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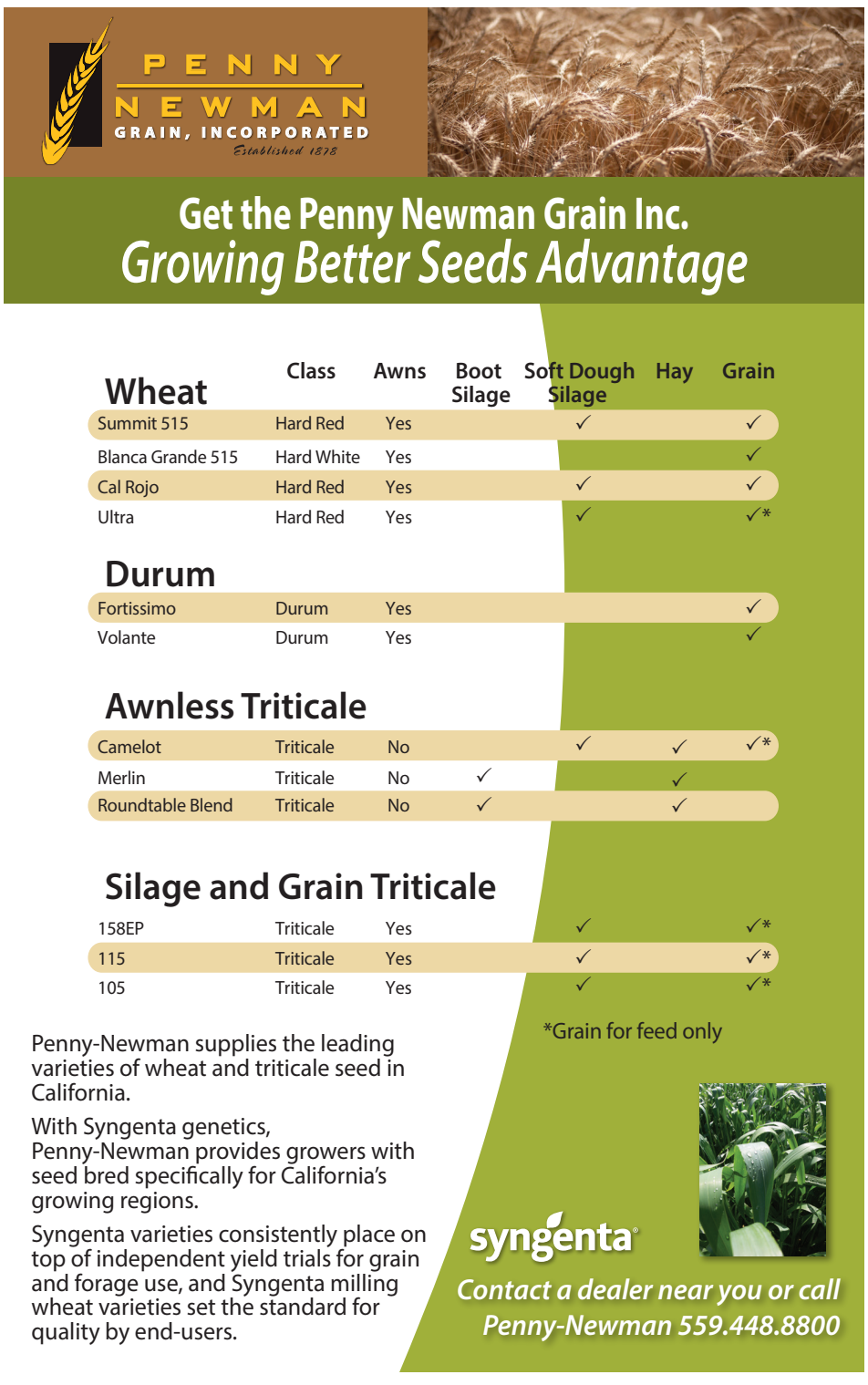

Ag Commentary: Legislative Year Ends with Successes for Farm Bureau

Rich Matteis, CFBF

The governor's deadline for signing and vetoing bills passed at midnight Monday. With the deadline behind us, it is a good time to review and recap the legislative outcomes of importance to Farm Bureau and agriculture as a whole.

During the course of the final two weeks before his deadline, the governor's actions were consistent with Farm Bureau's wishes in a number of key areas—not the least of which was CFBF-sponsored Assembly Bill 1390 (Luis Alejo, D-Watsonville). The signing of this bill was the culmination of our nearly yearlong effort to make groundwater adjudications more efficient. Also signed was a companion measure pertaining to adjudication, Senate Bill 226 (Fran Pavley, D-Agoura Hills).

With AB 1390, Farm Bureau focused on making the painfully slow adjudication system more efficient than it is now. Time sinks in the current judicial process were identified and AB 1390 was drafted to deal with those in more efficient ways. SB 226 focused primarily on clarifying that the new adjudication law does not conflict with the local groundwater planning and management directed to be done under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. Clearly, the passage of AB 1390 was a big victory for those wanting to obtain certainty of their groundwater rights.

In the arena of employment issues, the governor was particularly cautious when acting upon measures that would negatively impact employers and, in some cases, employees as well. The governor vetoed measures that would prohibit the use of arbitration agreements to resolve employment-related disputes, AB 465 (Roger Hernandez, D-West Covina); expand the number of parties participating in Cal/OSHA variance decisions, AB 578 (Evan Low, D-Campbell); expand the application of the Family Rights Act, SB 406 (Hannah Beth-Jackson, D-Santa Barbara); and require employers to post a bond to appeal an Agricultural Labor Relations Board order making a make-whole, back-pay or other monetary award, AB 561 (Nora Campos, D-San Jose). Earlier in the year, SB 3 (Mark Leno, D-San Francisco), which would have raised the minimum wage to $13 per hour by 2017 and indexed minimum wages to inflation, was held in the Assembly and is now a two-year bill.

Labor-related legislation signed by the governor included AB 1513 (Das Williams, D-Carpinteria), which addresses confusion regarding piece-rate compensation systems, including those used in agriculture. The measure provides a "safe harbor" for most employers who may not have correctly compensated piece-rate employees for non-productive time. The governor also signed Farm Bureau-supported AB 1506 (Hernandez, D-West Covina), which provides employers an opportunity to cure technical wage-statement violations.

Although the Legislature will continue to focus on transportation funding, we have joined others in staving off new tax increases to fund highway projects so far. Farm Bureau supports consideration of all reasonable and cost-effective means to generate funding for construction and maintenance of our state highway system, but we also believe that investing in California highways, roads and bridges is actually a question of spending priorities, not lack of revenue. State spending for almost every program area has grown significantly since the 2007-09 Great Recession ended, yet transportation infrastructure has received very little and has been the lowest priority for new state funds. We will work with the Legislature and others to seek transportation funding solutions in the year ahead.

Farm Bureau was a key player in negotiating acceptable language in SB 27 (Jerry Hill, D-San Mateo), a measure relating to the use of antibiotics in animal agriculture (see story). Though the bill imposes new requirements for veterinary prescriptions for feed directives for medically important antibiotics, it still allows over-the-counter sales at retailers with a veterinarian's order. Burdensome tracking and monitoring requirements were amended out of the bill at the request of Farm Bureau and other stakeholders.

In addition to AB 1390, another CFBF-sponsored measure was signed into law by the governor. AB 732 (Jim Cooper, D-Elk Grove) amends the Food and Agricultural Code to allow owners of cattle to add a business partner owning a minority share without needing to have the herd of cattle inspected, so long as all owners of the cattle certify that the controlling interest of the cattle is not changing. The intent of the bill is to reduce costs of transferring family dairies and cattle ranches to the next generation. Another bill amending the Food and Agricultural Code will reduce licensing costs for seed dealers while granting new protection for seed producers under the California Seed Law and ensures that seed production services are also covered.

The governor did veto a measure CFBF co-sponsored, AB 515 (Susan Eggman, D-Stockton), which would have broadened and extended the state income tax credit for donations of food to food banks. The governor used the same veto message for all nine tax-credit proposals that the Legislature sent to him, noting that despite strong revenue performance during the past few years, the state budget remains precariously balanced due to unexpected costs and the provision of new services.

We were also disappointed that the governor vetoed AB 429 (Brian Dahle, R-Bieber), which would have required state agencies to give preference to timber harvested following the requirements of California forest practice rules, so long as price and quality are equal. While direct state purchasing of lumber is fairly small relative to all lumber purchased in the state, it is important for the state to lead in its efforts to support timber producers who comply with California's strict forest practice standards.

Environmental bills are always the focus of attention in any legislative session. SB 32 (Pavley, D-Agoura Hills) would have extended the state's mandatory greenhouse gas emissions-reduction program, but was held on the Assembly floor; Farm Bureau was among those opposed to the measure. SB 350 (Kevin de Leon, D-Los Angeles), which requires increased energy efficiency of 50 percent for buildings in California and a 50 percent increase in the state Renewable Portfolio Standard, was signed into law, but only after amendments were taken to eliminate provisions that would have required a 50 percent reduction in fuel use for vehicles. Also on the air-emissions front, Farm Bureau and other stakeholders came to agreement with Assembly Member Tony Thurmond, D-Richmond, whose AB 1496 could have led to new methane regulations but now requires an Air Resources Board study of the matter.

All in all, we at Farm Bureau believe it was a productive year for us in the state Legislature. We will be back next year, the second year of the session, to work on unfinished business and to take on an entirely new body of work as legislators introduce new measures beginning in a few months.

We want to thank all of our Farm Team members who contacted legislators this year when the calls for action went out, and the many county Farm Bureaus that also reached out to their legislators on key issues and signed coalition letters when requested. Your collective, grassroots efforts made a resounding impact on many of the success stories above. We look forward to working with you again in 2016, as the Legislature returns.

(Rich Matteis is administrator of the California Farm Bureau Federation. He may be contacted at rmatteis@cfbf.com.)

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Ag Commentary: Devastating Fires Destroy Timber, Federal Budgets

Erin Huston, CFBF

Healthy forests provide all Californians with an abundant source of clean water, clean air and unsurpassed recreational opportunities. California's forests store and filter 60 percent of the state's water supply. They provide jobs for tens of thousands of forest products workers and they generate $85.4 billion in recreation and economic activity. When our forests are unhealthy, all that depends on them is threatened.

The 2015 fire season is a living illustration of the immense impact catastrophic wildfire can have on the forests that California's economy depends on. Lost timber resources and wildlife habitat, increased soil erosion, lost jobs, damage to private property and degradation of watersheds are only some of the examples of negative impacts from fire. Nationally, it is estimated that more than 8.5 million acres have burned in 2015. The National Interagency Fire Center estimates 7,120 fires and almost 586,000 acres had burned in California as of Sept. 8.

On Aug. 5, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced that the U.S. Forest Service would spend more than 50 percent of its budget for the first time to suppress the nation's wildfires. With the trend of increasing wildfire suppression costs expected to continue, it is predicted that two-thirds of the agency's budget will go toward fire suppression work by 2025. Catastrophic fire is simultaneously projected to burn twice as many acres by 2050. Obviously, these forecasts are not favorable for our federal budget or our forests.

When fire suppression funding runs out, both the USFS and the Department of Interior have the authority to transfer funds from within their budgets to make up for shortfalls. Because not enough money has been allocated in the federal budget to fight wildfires, money for forest management activities ends up being transferred to instead fund wildfire suppression activities. Suppression funding levels are generally based on the 10-year average of suppression costs and currently that's not enough.

On Aug. 25, USFS Chief Tom Tidwell sent a letter to field offices directing them to once again prepare for fire suppression transfers. Based on recent forecasts, $450 million will be transferred—split into two phases. If fire suppression continues at the current rate of $120 million to $150 million per week, these transfers may not even be enough to meet end-of-the-year suppression needs.

This current funding system leaves other forest management activities, including activities that reduce the risk of fire, shortchanged. For this reason, Farm Bureau has been urging Congress to pass the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act, which would fundamentally change the approach to funding wildfire suppression. WDFA would develop a wildfire emergency funding process for a portion of USFS and DOI suppression activities similar to funds for other natural disasters such as hurricanes, floods and tornadoes. It would also treat catastrophic wildfires as the "predictable emergencies" and provide a more reliable funding structure that does not harm land management and wildfire risk-reduction activities. In the rare case it should become necessary, USFS and DOI would retain their financial transfer authorities.

Allocating more money to fire suppression is not the only remedy needed to address our nation's catastrophic wildfire problem. Congress must also address the relationship between fire risk and forest management. There are many contributing factors behind the cause, size and intensity of wildfire, which may include excessive fuel load, overcrowding, drought, insects and disease, and even invasive species. We must identify and mitigate those factors that are controllable.

Treating and properly managing our forests is the best strategy to reduce fire risk. Yet, according to the Forest Service, between 62 million and 82 million acres are in need of treatment at risk of catastrophic wildfire. That's over 40 percent of the total USFS system. The constant threat of litigation often prevents the federal government from actively managing our forests and watersheds. Over time, this litigation threat has come at a cost as we see valuable forest resources, rural communities and recreational opportunities destroyed or significantly impacted.

There are several federal legislative proposals that seek to creatively expedite and improve forest management activities. Farm Bureau is supportive of federal land management agencies working to increase the pace and scale of forest thinning and other activities that contribute to fire prevention, water availability and forest restoration and remains actively engaged in these discussions.

Destructive megafires do not discriminate what or where they burn. The impacts on our water, energy and environment are felt throughout the state. It is time to take a serious look at current forest management and fire suppression policies to increase efforts to reduce forest fuels, expand programs to improve forest health and responsibly fund fire suppression.

(Erin Huston is a federal policy consultant for the California Farm Bureau Federation. She may be contacted at ehuston@cfbf.com)

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Slavery Alive in Tulare County

Dave Adalian

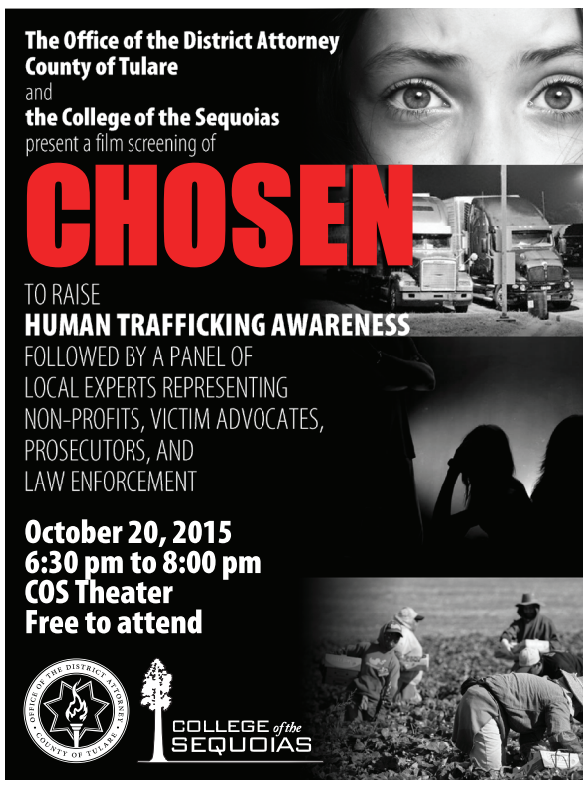
The Central Valley has a slavery problem of which most residents are unaware. It is a center for human trafficking, much of it focused on the sex trade, but now an effort is underway in Tulare County to change that.

Centrally located in the state with an entrenched criminal element and a high population of young people and immigrants to prey upon, the South Valley is uniquely suited to a terrible crime largely ignored both in the media and by authorities, say officials. That, too, is changing, as those charged with stopping these largely unseen crimes work to educate those who could become its next victims.

"Tulare County is in the middle of the state, so it's a high-traffic area. We've got gangs. They'll take young people and force them to participate in sex acts against their will," said Louie Campos, president of the Society of Legal Studies at College of the Sequoias, which will host a forum on human trafficking on Tuesday, October 20. "That's slavery," he said.

Slavery by the Numbers

Statistics from the state Office of the Attorney General tell the story. From 2010 to 2012, nearly 1,300 victims of traffickers were identified within California, and about 1,800 people were arrested for enslaving them. Of the victims, 56% had been forced into prostitution, while 23% were being used as forced labor. The vast majority, 72%, were US citizens. Among those forced into the sex trade, 98% were women and girls.



Those arrests barely scratch the surface. According to the Center for Public Policy Studies, California may have as many as half a million immigrants forced to work in agriculture against their will, and the crime is not limited to the state's fields.

Sweatshops in major cities are also home to human bondage. But the focus remains the sex trade, and the fact sex slavery happens here is a terrible surprise to many, including those whose job it is to address the crime.

"I was shocked Tulare County was in some of those briefs," said Stuart Anderson, public information officer for the Tulare County District Attorney's office, describing his work on the DA's human trafficking task force. "I didn't know that was going on here. I bet there are a lot of others in the same boat."

Authorities Working Locally

The DA's office has not been idle. A full-time investigator has been assigned to work with law enforcement when a case of trafficking is discovered, and a victim advocate now works with those rescued from their captors.

Their efforts have resulted in arrests and convictions, such as that of 31-year-old Tyrell Richmond, who was taken into custody in Visalia in August of last year, for allegedly forcing three girls into prostitution, or Alejandro Manuel Perez, 26, of Visalia, who pleaded guilty to two counts of sex trafficking a minor in 2013.

As important as prosecution is prevention, which is why the DA's office has begun a series of educational presentations designed to alert area residents to the dangers of becoming a victim.

Those who attend will also learn to identify those already being exploited.

"A lot of times, people don't understand what's going on," said Campos. "They accuse the victims of being prostitutes. It's not the same thing. It's slavery. We're trying to bring awareness to that difference."

Spotting the Signs

At the October 20 COS event, a 20-minute video "Chosen" will present the story of how two victims found themselves unwilling participants in sex-for-sale crimes.

"It spotlights two young women who were caught up in this, I don't want to call it an industry, but that's what it is," Campos said. "They tell the story of how easily people can fall into this trap."

The evening will also include an expert panel that will discuss the problem locally, as well as providing information on how to spot the signs of victimization.

The event organizers are hoping to reach a young audience, as that group is most likely to become prey to such crimes. The program begins at 6:30pm in the COS Theatre. Admission is open to the public, and the event is free to attend.

"We're encouraging parents and children as young as middle-schoolers to come out," said Anderson. "The video is youth-friendly. The subject matter is mature, but it's been edited for community distribution. Human trafficking effects their age population, especially in high school. To able to recognize the signs among friends is really important."

For more information on the October 20 event or to report suspected human trafficking, contact the DA's office at 636-4517. Cases of suspected trafficking can also be reported to the California

Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking at (888) 539-2373.

This graphic, courtesy of Tulare County, maps out the locations and dates of Martinez's murders since 1980. Courtesy/Tulare County

Details Few on Contract Killer

Dave Adalian

Authorities have closed the books on half a dozen unsolved murders in Tulare County dating back as far as 1980, and the man responsible will spend the rest of his life behind bars.

On October 6, Jose Manuel Martinez, 53, also known as the Black Hand or El Mano Negro, plead guilty in Tulare County Superior Court to nine counts of murder and one of attempted murder. The crimes took place over 35 years, and Martinez claims he carried the killings out for payment at the request of an unnamed Mexican crime syndicate.

Authorities, citing the ongoing investigation into his crimes, are tight-lipped about the self-described hitman, who is scheduled for sentencing on November 2.

"He was actually brought to the attention of the Tulare County Sheriff's Office ... when he started talking about crimes committed in Tulare County while in custody in Alabama," said Stuart Anderson, spokesman for the District Attorney's Office. "They went out there and interviewed him."

Arrested Entering US

Martinez's downfall began in 2013 when he murdered a business associate for making remarks about his daughter while in Alabama. He was able to elude authorities there, but was later captured while crossing into Arizona from Mexico. Martinez is currently in custody in Tulare County awaiting sentencing, but has already been convicted of the Alabama murder, for which he will serve a 50-year sentence. He faces two additional homicide charges in Florida. Charges here were filed in April of 2014.

According to the *Los Angeles Times*, Martinez was contacted by a detective from the TCSO in 2012 regarding a series of home-invasion robberies unrelated to the murders. When he was arrested for his crimes in Alabama, Martinez began to unburden himself, discussing other murders he had committed during what he says is a career stretching back to 1978. The killer asked to speak to that same TCSO detective, Christal Derington, who described him as "pleasant and cooperative." Relatives of his victims described Martinez as someone who seemed to be "an ordinary guy."

Long Criminal Past

Martinez has a long history of arrests in California, mostly for vehicle theft, burglary, and methamphetamine use and sales. His first arrest in the state was in 1989 for drug sales in Orange County. At the time of his arrest in 2013, Martinez was living at least part-time in Richgrove, an unincorporated community of about 2,800 near Earlimart in southern Tulare County. The DA's office said Martinez had maintained several homes in Fresno, Kern and Tulare counties over the years. Agencies in those areas are now revisiting cold cases to see if they can find indications Martinez was involved in them. He claims to have committed at least 30 murders in a dozen states.

Beyond claiming a relationship as a debt collector with Mexican crime syndicates, Anderson said Martinez has revealed little about himself. The focus of the DA's investigation has been the murders and not the motives behind them, he said.

Contract Killing on Parole

At least three of the murders Martinez claims to have committed occurred while he was on parole. He began a two-year sentence for drug possession and grand theft in Tulare County in 2007, was paroled in 2008, rearrested for parole violation in 2009 and eventually released on parole again in 2010, which lasted until 2012. Three killings in the Richgrove area, to which Martinez confessed, occurred during that period.

According to authorities in Alabama, Martinez motivation was purely financial.

"It's how he fed his family is how he explained it," Det. T.J. Watts of the Marion County, Ala., Sheriff's Department told CNN at the time of Martinez's arrest there. "And if he didn't do the job, someone else would do it."

During the investigation in Alabama, Martinez claimed to have started working for the unnamed drug syndicate when he was 16 years old. He was paid 25% of the debts he collected, he said. Authorities have little recourse to confirm those claims. However, they are certain he committed the murders to which he confessed, presenting investigators with details only someone involved with the crimes could know.

"This serial killer and self-described 'hitman' will spend the rest of his life behind bars," said Tulare County DA Tim Ward. "There is no doubt that he has proven himself to be a grave danger to our community, so we all will take comfort that he has been removed from society."

KILLER continued on **10 »**

Mike Spata Appointed Interim Tulare County CAO

Catherine Doe

Jean Rousseau, Tulare County's Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) for eight years, has resigned to accept an offer from Fresno County. Fresno County officials announced October 1 that Rousseau had accepted a job to become their CAO. Rousseau will be replacing Fresno County's current CAO, John Navarrette, who has been on the job for 31 years. Rousseau's last day of work for Tulare County will be October 23, and he will officially start his new job October 26. Rousseau spent a year being Fresno County's finance officer, in 2007, before moving to Tulare County.

According to the *Visalia Times-Delta*, "In Oct. 2012, the supervisors voted to raise Rousseau's annual salary 10.6% to $180,000 a year, noting one of the primary reasons was to keep him from being recruited by higher-paying counties or cities. An additional 2% raise that took effect July 12 increased his salary to $189,107."

Although Rousseau's salary as Fresno County CAO was not disclosed as of press time, Navarette, had a base pay of $217,623 per year.

During the closed-session portion of the October 6 Tulare County Board of Supervisors meeting, Mike Spata was appointed to serve as interim CAO while the county conducts a search for Rousseau's permanent replacement.

Spata said he is seriously considering putting his name in for the job. He is currently the county's Resource Management Agency's director, and has served in the past as Tulare County's assistant CAO.

During the regular session of the October 6 meeting, Supervisor Allen Ishida reminisced when he and former Tulare County Supervisor Connie Conway had first hired Rousseau. He attributed Rousseau with being the main reason that Tulare County is in one of the best financial positions of any county in the state.

Supervisor Steve Worthley pointed out that Fresno County will be twice the size of Tulare County's government, but also will be double the headache. Worthley wished him well and sent a message to Fresno County, saying that Rousseau "did not create their problems, but is just inheriting them."

Kathleen Bales-Lang, county council, did jokingly ask Rousseau to stay until she retired. She said, the CAO and the county council need to work closely together for the health of the county and that is what they have done.

"We made a good team," she said.

Bales-Lang pointed out that Tulare County established the county council in 1946, and there have been five county councils, including her. Conversely, the county established the position of CAO in 1981, and Rousseau is the 10th one to hold the post. Worthely added that Rousseau's tenure has been the longest of anyone else who has worked for the county.

Tulare Police Chief Jerry Breckinridge Announces Resignation

Catherine Doe

Five days after news broke about a suspected DUI, Tulare Police Chief Jerry Breckinridge resigned. His resignation will be in effect on November 13. On Tuesday, October 6, two hours before the regularly scheduled Tulare City Council meeting, the City of Tulare along with Breckinridge released a joint statement announcing his resignation. Both Mayor David Macedo and Vice Mayor Carlton Jones were absent during the city council meeting and the subject of Breckinridge's resignation was not discussed.

Breckinridge stated at the time of his resignation, "In recent months, I have focused on personal matters requiring my immediate and undivided attention, I am thankful to the City for supporting my wish and right to privacy throughout this time. It is with mixed feelings that I bring this chapter in life to a close and announce my resignation from the Tulare Police Department, effective November 13, 2015. I thank city administration, city residents, and members of the police department for allowing me to serve the community of Tulare for over 26 years."

In the October 1, *Valley Voice* it was reported that Breckinridge was allegedly pulled over for a DUI at the end of May and was taken home instead of arrested. It was also alleged that a domestic abuse case in March of last year was not fully investigated.

In a comment on the *Valley Voice*'s website, Vice-Mayor Jones said that, for his part, he believes that some or all of the allegations may be true, posting that "As a citizen I think Jerry mad[e] a huge mistake and it's being swept under the rug I think other officers know the truth."

Breckinridge's resignation will put an end to nearly six months of paid administrative leave. He served on the Tulare Police force for 26 years and was police chief since 2008. Breckinridge had been lauded for his public service and his tenure as the chief of police. The discontent originates not from his service to Tulare, but from his preferential treatment and the citizens of Tulare not being told the truth.

As reported May 29 by KSEE, Tulare City Manager Don Dorman said, "It's a personnel matter so we have no comment one way or the other."

This left many Tulare residents to wonder what's going on with Breckinridge.

KSEE reported further, "Dorman wouldn't confirm if the chief is on administrative leave, only stating he's been "'unavailable.'"

A month later Dorman finally revealed that Breckinridge was on paid administrative leave.

In regard to the alleged DUI, Dorman told KSEE back in May, "We don't even know what happened so it's impossible to say whether it affects the city or not." Concerning the domestic abuse, Dorman added, "That was fully investigated by the Sheriff's Dept., by the District Attorney, we internally investigated... reviewed facts and evidence and found there was no basis to file a criminal complaint. There was no basis for taking any action in that matter."

Capt. Wes Hensley was named the Interim Police Chief during Breckinridge's administrative leave and will stay at the helm while the city searches for a permanent replacement. While the *Valley Voice* was contacted by at least one outsider with a lifetime of law enforcement experience regarding the position, Tulare City Mayor David Macedo has expressed a desire to hire a police chief in-house.

Parks

Continued from p. 1

Progress Possible

The fact the TCPAC exists is a sign progress can be made, and it signals a willingness by elected officials to address the problem.

"We needed this, the public input. I'm very hopeful, because we have a number of goodhearted people who are interested in our parks," Worthley said.

Yet the lack of response from the county's civil servants leaves a bitter taste in the mouths of critics who say the problem stems from neglect and incompetence.

"If it was a private concern, anyone within 10 miles would get fired. I don't think anyone at the government level cares," said John Rogers, a resident who lives near Mooney Grove and has long been vocal with his complaints. "They're starting to care now because they understand it's not just some lunatic fringe that wants the park cleaned up. I'm not accusing anyone of corruption or anything like that. I just think the park hasn't been a priority. It's just disgraceful."

Supervisors to Blame

In particular, Rogers blames the leadership of Cox, whose district includes Mooney Grove.

"If Phil Cox gets (re-)elected, the park is dead for sure," Rogers said. "He's neglected his duty. The only way we're going to get things done is to replace some of those people. We've got to get the board of supervisors' priorities straight."

Rogers said he supports the campaign of Visalia City Council Member Amy Shuklian, who is running for the seat Cox currently occupies and has promised to make the park a campaign priority. On October 10, Shuklian addressed a meeting of the Real Mooney Grove Project, a nonprofit group formed to force the county to address its concerns about the park. Shuklian did not respond to a request for an interview.

Cleanup Should Start Now

Despite the formation of an oversight committee, Worthley and critics of the county agree revitalization efforts should start now.

"We did bump it (financing for county parks) up," said Worthley. "We have a lot of what I call simple deferred maintenance, broken barbecue grills, stuff like that. We don't need a committee to do that stuff. There's been benign neglect of the parks. That was just an oversight on our part."

Rogers could not agree more. He would even like to see Mooney Grove taken out of the county's hands if a solution is not forthcoming soon.

"If they can't do a better job than that, they need to make a deal with one of these conservancies and let them take care of it," he said. "I'd be embarrassed if I was in charge of this park."

Meanwhile, the TCPAC will hold its next meeting at 6 pm on Wednesday, October 21, at the County Administrative Office, 2800 W. Burrel Ave. in Visalia. The public is welcome to attend.

Killer

Continued from p. 9

His Victims

The list of crimes to which Martinez has admitted and his victims includes: Murder of David Bedolla, 23, of Lindsay on October 21, 1980. The victim was shot while driving his vehicle to work with his wife, brother and brother-in-law. The shooting took place between Lindsay and Strathmore.

Murder of Sylvester Ayon, 30, and the attempted murder of 17- year-old G. G. on October 1, 1982. Both were shot while working on a ranch near Santa Ynez off Refugio road in Santa Barbara County. The 17-year-old survived the shooting, while Ayon died from multiple gunshot wounds.

Murder of Raul Gonzalez, 22, of Earlimart. The victim was last seen at his home on October 19, 1982. Two days later his body was located by ranchers off Fountain Springs Road, east of Porterville. He had been shot and stabbed multiple times.

Murder of Domingo Perez, 29, of Earlimart. The victim was reported missing by family members on April 8, 1995. His body was located in an orange grove just north of Richgrove on May 23, 1995. He had been shot once in the head.

Murder of Santiago Perez, 56, of Pixley, who was shot to death in his bed in the early morning hours of February 14, 2000. The victim's four minor children were home at the time of the shooting.

Murder of Jose Alvarado, 25, of Kern County on February 15, 2007. The victim was located on a dirt access road outside McFarland. He had been shot multiple times.

Murder of Juan Bautista Moreno, 52, of Kern County on March 23, 2009. The victim was located in an orange grove south of Elmo Highway near McFarland. He had been shot multiple times.

Murder of Joaquin Barragan, 45, of Earlimart on September 30, 2009. The victim was located on the bank of Deer Creek canal just east of Earlimart by ranchers working the area. He had been missing since September 27, 2009. Barragan suffered multiple gunshot wounds.

Murder of Gonzalo Urquieta, 54, of Earlimart on February 7, 2011. The victim was located in an orange grove just outside of Richgrove. He had been missing since February 5, 2011. Urquieta was shot multiple times.

Development booming in West Hanford. During a recent meeting concerning the General Plan Robin Mattos explained, "We aren't a bunch of tree huggers. We just want a place for the water to drain and some open space." Courtesy/Robin Mattos

Corrections to "HEAT Wins First Round Against City of Hanford"

Catherine Doe

The *Valley Voice* would like to apologize for the errors in the article "HEAT Wins First Round Against City of Hanford."The writer used two sources but still interpreted the judge's decision incorrectly.

Hanford lawyer, Mario Zamora, took the time to outline the needed corrections which are listed below.

The bigger issue of the article was to highlight the fact that more and more of Mussel Slough is illegally being filled-in.

The portion concerning Mussel Slough in the October 1 article was not refuted by Hanford's lawyer.

A recently approved housing complex on the corner of Centennial Drive and Millennium Way sits on the banks of Mussel Slough and directly on a section of Mussel Slough that was unlawfully filled-in by Paynter Realty and Investments in 2007.

Again, sometime between March and May of this year, despite all efforts to prevent it from happening, the second section of the slough remnant was filled-in by an unknown group.

The only evidence left behind was a backhoe and a missing slough. The filled-in slough remnant sits directly west of the proposed housing complex.

Hanford planning commission and city council are in the final stages of approving the 2035 General Plan.

The new General Plan has no provisions as to how the city will prevent further destruction of Mussel Slough.

Hanford's sole source of water comes from an underground aquifer, and if that aquifer collapses because the city did not take care of their natural recharge basins, such as Mussel Slough, the necessity for a 2035 General Plan will be moot.

To review a draft of the general plan visit: http://bit.ly/1LuRKwj.

Water saving strategies were addressed the first week of October by the Hanford City staff.

The new water conservation campaign is asking Hanford residents to cut their water use by 60 gallons a day because the city missed their state mandated water cutback by 22%.

While the residents have been asked to drastically reduce their use of water, the city staff has not explained where the water will come from for the new 216 unit housing complex on Centennial Drive or the possible housing development proposed for the other half of Hidden Valley.

The state mandated cutback for Hanford was 28% while the city only reduced its water use by 5.8%.

There was a joint Hanford City Council - Planning Commission meeting on Tuesday, October 13, after press time, where the general plan was discussed.

Catherine,

After reading your article at the link below, I just wanted to point out that the headline and the main point of your story is 100% incorrect. I represent the City in the matter and if you have any questions, you can contact me anytime.

You wrote:

"The judge decided in a September 22 hearing that HEAT would be given 10 more days from the issuance of the court's ruling to appeal the city's decision." The judge did not decide any such thing. The judge ruled that HEAT's petition with the Court was defective and gave them 10 to resubmit it to the Court. It has nothing to do with appealing the City's decision.

"The court agreed with HEAT that their appeal and fee should have been accepted by the City of Hanford and ordered a redo." This is completely false; the judge ordered no such thing. He ordered that HEAT has 10 days to fix their defective petition to the Court. The Judge has not ordered the City to do anything.

"Late in 2007, HEAT sued the City of Hanford and Mizote for filling-in the slough and won their case." The case was not won by HEAT - winning means there was a verdict in their favor. There was a settlement. Mizote was never sued by HEAT.

"The city had to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with HEAT outlining conditions aimed at preventing this from ever happening again." The City did not have to sign an MOU. It chose to sign the MOU as part of settling the case.

If you asked any lawyer not involved with the case, no one would conclude "HEAT Wins First Round Against the City of Hanford," the title of your article.

Mario U. Zamora

Valley Oak SPCA Seeks Veterinarian

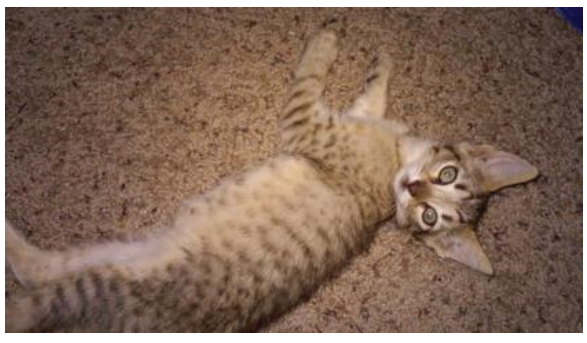
Nancy Vigran

Less than a year after moving to its new west Visalia facility, the Valley Oak SPCA Low-Cost Clinic is in need of a new doctor. For the past month, the clinic has ceased offering vaccination and spay/neuter surgeries to the public, due to the lack of a veterinarian.

"We're in the process of trying to find and hire a new one," said Kelly Austin, administrative services manager.

A task that is not easy, Austin said.

Finding a veterinarian who is willing to stand and perform routine surgery all day is difficult, she said.



Veruca is a female five-month-old Domestic Shorthair/Mix with the VOSPCA, is spayed, and is available for adoption. Her animal ID is 28294267.

"Veterinarians go into private practice to do a multitude of things," she said, not just spay and neuter animals.

This is compounded by finding someone who wants to, or is willing to, relocate to the Central Valley.

"We thought we had someone, but he chose to take a position at the Coast," Austin said.

The Visalia clinic normally offers its low-cost vaccinations and microchipping services weekday mornings, and spay and neuter services five days a week by appointment. It also provides spay and neuter surgery for feral cats with no appointment needed. But all of this has come to a halt, for now.

"We are hoping that someone will hear our plea," Austin said.

While the lack of a staff veterinarian is also a major inconvenience and can be costly to the VOSPCA shelter, it does not affect the animal care there. VOSPCA provides shelter for the cities of Visalia and Dinuba animal control.

Melody is a female one year old Hound/Mix with the VOSPCA, and is available for adoption. Her Animal ID is 29622755.

Potential adoptable dogs and cats are being shuttled to Fresno's Halt Overpopulation with Prevention and Education (HOPE's) spay and neuter clinic. Other medical services are currently being provided through local veterinarians.

"It's tight," Austin said, "It makes everything on a tight budget, because it's not being done in-house, but they (the animals) are being taken care of and that is the important thing."

In 2013, the VOSPCA clinic altered 5,351 animals, gave 16,334 vaccinations and microchipped 601 pets, according to its annual report. Each year, the goal is to increase these numbers to help provide proper care for pets in the community.

The VOSPCA clinic is located at 9405 W. Goshen (just west of Plaza Drive in the Sequoia Business Park). When operating, it provides dog and cat vaccinations from 9am-Noon, Monday-Friday, and spay or neuter surgeries by appointment, Monday-Friday. Animals must be at least two months of age and weigh three pounds, or more, to be eligible for surgery. For more information, call (559) 741-1121, or call (559) 741-0492, to setup a spay or neuter appointment.

The VOSPCA shelter is located at 29010 Highway 99 and is open Monday and Wednesday, 9:30am-6pm, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 9am-5pm, and Sunday 12-4pm.

Adoptions are available through the shelter, with cats also available at PetsMart in Visalia and Porterville. Off-site adoption venues are held many weekends throughout the year at various locations throughout the South Valley.

For more information call (559) 651-1111 or visit vospca.org.

Emergency

Continued from p. 1

canceled or severely limited for a number of days.

Debbie Vaughn, senior administrative analyst, explained to the board that Tulare County may not be qualified to declare the emergency because most of the dying trees are on federal lands. Andrew Lockman, Tulare County emergency services manager, explained that, to qualify for FEMA dollars, the county would have to show millions of dollars in damages.

Even though Tulare County may not technically be qualified to call a state of emergency, Supervisor Steve Worthley was insistent that the county bring the dire situation to the federal government's attention. He said that if there is a hurricane or a flood, it would be considered an emergency, but that tree mortality is an emergency also. He further stated that the federal government needs to start treating it like the emergency it is. Worthley added that the federal government will not help if counties apply for relief one at a time and that Tulare County must get together with the other counties.

Although Supervisor Phil Cox said this is a federal issue that has been ignored for decades, he decided to support his fellow supervisors and voted with them to declare a state of emergency.

Briefly...

COUNTY APPLIES TO MILITARY PROGRAM TO HELP DRILL NEW WELLS

Assemblyman Devon Mathis brought an innovative program to the attention of Tulare County Administration that could help our drought stricken area. The program is the Defense Department's Civil-Military Innovative Readiness Training Program and the program could help drill some of the many new community wells needed in the county.

Denise England, Water Resources Program Manager, explained to the Tulare County Board of Supervisors at their regularly scheduled Tuesday meeting, that the military training program could be used to drill new wells in East Porterville, Monson Sultana or Okieville. The military would bring their own materials and supplies and will utilize the drilling of wells as preparedness training for military personnel.

According to their website, the Department of Defense (DOD) started the Innovative Readiness Training Program in 1993 to provide "real-world training opportunities for our service members and units to prepare them for their wartime missions while supporting the needs of America's underserved communities,"

Supervisor Pete Vander Poel asked if this program had ever been used to help drill wells. England said not exactly. The program is mostly used for medical training of personnel but that drilling wells would be considered real world experience. The closest National Guard civil engineering unit that drills wells is in Arizona and may be a few years away from practicing drilling. England hoped that they would move it up their schedule in light of Tulare County's needs

The TCBOS voted unanimously to submit the application to the Department of Defense

TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP IS POSITIVE FOR CA CITRUS

"After conversations with authorities in Washington, I have come to the conclusion that the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Trade Agreement is positive for the California citrus industry," states CCM President Joel Nelsen. "The proposal calls for immediate reductions in tariffs on citrus entering Japan and Vietnam and sets into motion the complete elimination of tariffs within a matter of years."

California citrus has long been disadvantaged relative to other exporters to Japan. The TPP agreement will help level the playing field. Most fresh citrus imported into the United States is subject to a tariff or 3% or less. In contrast, California citrus has been subject to tariffs of over 30% in Vietnam and Japan. Japan is one of the industry's oldest off-shore customers and Vietnam is an emerging market.

Another area of concern for the citrus industry, as well as the broader fresh fruit and vegetable industry, has been dispute resolution language. "Most countries, and even some sectors of U.S. Agriculture, would like to establish tribunals in which our nation's concerns would constantly be out voted. It appears though that the Administration has maintained our scientific process the integrity of protecting agriculture from invasive pests and diseases to the greatest extent possible," says Nelsen.

"TPP will effectively lower product prices for importers and the retail customers. Optimally, these savings will be passed on to the end consumer, thereby increasing demand for CA grown citrus," concludes Nelsen.

AIR DISTRICT OPENS GRANT PROGRAM FOR TRUCKS

Up to $40,000 available to replace a class 5 or class 6 truck

The Valley Air District is seeking Valley truckers – truck owners and small businesses operating Class 5 or Class 6 trucks – for grant funding to help reduce truck emissions in the San Joaquin Valley. Participants can receive up to $40,000 per eligible truck (not to exceed 35% of the total cost of the new truck).

Eligible truck owners need to be small business owners in the San Joaquin Valley operating Class 5 (16,001 to 19,500 lbs. Gross Vehicle Weight Rating) or Class 6 (19,501 to 26,000 lbs. Gross Vehicle Weight Rating) trucks currently in compliance with the California Air Resources Board on-road truck regulations.

"We understand the importance of providing financial incentives to this crucial part of our Valley's economy and are very pleased we can offer this assistance," said Seyed Sadredin, the district's executive director and air pollution control officer.

District funding will provide truckers with assistance that further reduces emissions beyond mere compliance with existing state regulations. This funding can be paired with the California Hybrid and Zero-Emission Truck and Bus Voucher Incentive Program (HVIP) operated through CALSTART.

The application period opened October 1 and applications are available through participating dealerships. The application period will remain open until the funds have been exhausted.

The program is targeting 1991 -2003 engine model year trucks that meet the program eligibility requirements below:

- Domiciled in the San Joaquin Valley
- Currently registered and in operation
- Meets minimum usage requirements

A complete listing of program requirements and participating dealerships can be found at http://valleyair.org/grants/onroadtrucks.htm or by calling program staff at 559-230-5800.

SECOND 9-WEEK MINI SEMESTER BEGINS AT WEST HILLS

While the fall semester at West Hills College began nearly two months ago, students can now sign up for another first-day-of-school that begins in October.

No, it's not a do-over. It's the second in a series of nine-week courses offered during fall semester, often called mini-mesters.

The mini-mester courses provide the same amount of instruction, and the same number of college credits, as regular 18-week classes. Content is the same and students receive an equal number of college credits for successful completion.

"It's a great opportunity for new students whose job or other responsibilities impose a limit on the number of weeks they can devote to study and class time," said Rita Grogan, associate vice chancellor of Enrollment Management. "It's also perfect for current students, offering them a way to add some credits and achieve their completion goals earlier. You can choose from about 70 courses at our colleges in Coalinga and Lemoore as well as the North District Center, Firebaugh. Many courses are also available online."

To see a complete list of open classes and to register, go to the college website at: westhillscollege.com

EXETER COMMUNITY SHRED DAY TO BE HELD SATURDAY

20/20 Financial Advisers and 20/20 Employee Benefits will host its annual Community Shred Day for residents of Exeter on Saturday, October 24th, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. A mobile shredding truck from Discount Shred will be on hand to shred personal documents for free. The truck is limited on space, documents will be shredded on a first come first served basis.

As a community service, anyone can bring personal paper documents such as old checks, forms and statements, anything with personal information. The event will be held at the office of 20/20 Financial Advisers of Exeter, located at 160 S. E Street (corner of Maple & E Street) in Exeter.

Our Shred Day addresses an ever-increasing threat to identity theft and is aimed at helping the residents of our communities to protect themselves from becoming victims.

GASTROENTEROLOGIST JOINS VISALIA MEDICAL CLINIC

Gastroenterologist Charles Oberer, MD, has joined Visalia Medical Clinic, after completion of his fellowship at UCSF Fresno.

Dr. Oberer is Board certified in internal medicine. He completed his residency at UCSF Fresno, and served as chief resident of internal medicine from 2011-2012.

He earned his medical degree at Loma Linda University School of Medicine, and chose to continue his medical training in the Valley in order to be closer to family members, who live in Visalia and Laton. He and his family, a wife and three children, live in Kingsburg but continue to attend church in Visalia.

"I really like the people of VMC," Dr. Oberer added. "I was very impressed by how the physicians interact with each other. As a specialist, I have to trust the primary care provider and know that they will follow through with my patients. I have also heard really good things about Kaweah Delta Medical Center and specifically the endoscopy unit, where I will do my procedures."

Dr. Oberer was inspired to focus on gastroenterology in part due to his experiences with a gastrointestinal illness as a teenager. The illness lasted over a year, and during that time he became close to the gastroenterologist.

"I admired him because he was kind to me and helped me through the symptoms," Dr. Oberer recalled. "I also like the technology side of gastroenterology – the technology is making rapid progress, with new scopes and new tools for improved diagnostics."

One tool that Dr. Oberer plans to offer his patients is the capsule endoscopy, in which the patient swallows a pill that contains a camera. The camera will allow him to see the entire gastrointestinal tract, which will be useful in cases of unexplained bleeding and to diagnose irritable bowel syndrome or Crohn's disease.

Dr. Oberer is accepting referrals. For information, visit www.vmchealth.com.

QUAIL PARK OF VISALIA HIRES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Jeff Moyer moves from Torrington, CT to pursue new opportunity at Quail Park

Quail Park of Visalia, simply the best choice for senior living in the San Joaquin Valley, has hired a new executive director. Jeff Moyer, from Torrington, CT was introduced to residents, family members and staff this week as the new executive director at the community.

Before joining Quail Park, Moyer was the traditional care director for Benchmark Senior Living in Avon, CT. Prior to Benchmark, he was the executive director for Community Options Inc., an organization that provides assisted living services in group homes and employment support services for adults with intellectual disabilities.

"Jeff's extensive experience in assisted living and senior care is outstanding and we are delighted that he is here to ensure we continue the quality of service and level of care expected at our community," said Sandy Hagar, marketing and community relations director at Quail Park.

"One of my many goals is to strive to meet the social, emotional, cultural, intellectual and spiritual well-being of all our residents and continue to provide the highest quality of care possible," said Jeff Moyer, executive director at Quail Park. "It's truly an honor to call Quail Park my new home."

WESTSIDE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY OFFERS TRUCK DRIVING COURSE FOR VETERANS STARTING OCT. 19

Veterans and veteran's dependents and spouses interested in learning about truck driving will soon be able to take advantage of a free course offered by the Westside Institute of Technology (WIT) and West Hills Community College District.

In conjunction with the City of Avenal and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, a truck driving course will be offered in Avenal to prepare qualified veterans, veteran's spouses and dependents to take the DMV Class A license exam and earn their Commercial Driver's License. The 240 hour, six-week long class will focus on giving students the knowledge and skills to land both local and long distance truck driving jobs.

The course will begin on Oct. 19 and will run Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Scout House in Avenal.

For more information, call or email WIT at 559-934-2169 or wit@whccd.edu.

Viewpoint

Not an Intentional Dirty Play

Nancy Vigran

As a member of the Valley Voice staff, I am privy to articles prior to their coming out in print. In fact, I am tasked with copy editing the publisher's column each issue, which doesn't amount to much, only occasional fact checking or reducing a run-on sentence or paragraph.

But, with regard to his current column on the recent playoff game between the Dodgers and Mets and "the play" of the playoffs, which baseball fans, everywhere, are talking about, when Chase Utley, a 2015 mid-season trade Dodger, slide into Met's second baseman, Ruben Tejada, resulting in a broken fibula for Tejada and no doubt a lot of bruising for both players, phew, it has lead me to writing a column of my own.

We had already been emailing back and forth about the play. We openly share our feelings about anything baseball. I did not know he was going to write about it, until I received his column.

In his column, Oldenbourg admits to being a lifelong Giant's fan and "so from my perspective the Dodgers are a soulless roster of high-paid prima donnas. Not a team at all, but a collection of very self-interested individuals."

Herein lies the rub.

I grew up a Dodger's fan, but not a Giant-hater. I do not think every Giant is a "soulless prima donna" (although high-paid fits). Nor, do I think the team "a collection of very self-interested individuals."

Doing so would be, well, profiling. Something that society looks down upon. Something I look down upon. I do believe that many (not all) Giant fans have been taught to hate the Dodgers, so much so, that they spend more time cheering against and hating the Boys in Blue, then they do cheering for their own team.

Perhaps, he was referring to the top players that make up the Dodger team and the seeming endless amount of money available to purchase contracts. Given that, I agree. While I do not consider the boys to be "soulless prima donnas," the Dodgers do have an abundance of players, often on the bench, who would be regulars in their position on several other major league teams. Does that make them prima donnas? No, they just want to play.

Admittedly, I don't love all Dodger players, past or present. I will cheer for them, as they are part of "my" team. I don't dislike all Giants . . . maybe some. But, I rather like and admire some too, like Posey and Baumgartner. I appreciate a good ballplayer, a good athlete, no matter what team, especially if he, or she, has a good attitude and represents their game well.

With all the trading going on in baseball today, it is difficult to keep up with who is playing where. Even more so when you can't follow your team on television, because of a blackout when a network and provider cannot come to an agreement for two years now, but that is for a different pet-peeve rant.

Utley was traded to the Dodgers from Philadelphia in late August. He has been a Dodger for less than two months and less than half the season. I am not sure I even fully consider him a Dodger yet. He apparently brought with him a history with the Mets, and had actually had a similar slide into Tejada at second, a few years back.

I have seen countless replays of "the" current slide and discussion in newspapers, on radios and on the internet ad nauseam. Was it dirty? I am not sure I would call it that. Was it proper? Not sure I would call it that either.

Los Angeles Times writer Houston Mitchell wrote in his blog¸ "You usually don't try to play dirty by slamming the side of your face into a guy's knee."

Good point.

It was a play similar to many I saw growing up watching baseball.

Admittedly, I spent years away from the sport. Although an avid follower in the '70s and '80s, my life took changes taking me away from baseball fan-hood for a couple of decades. A few years back, my interest was renewed, despite the many changes that have occurred in the sport.

Baseball, in general, is not played as aggressively as it used to be, and is played by many more individuals in any one game. It used to be that one pitcher pitched the game, unless he was doing poorly and had to be replaced. There were no 7th or 8th inning specialists. Pitchers weren't limited by pitch counts. Nor, did position players need to be replaced by a pinch hitter for the multitude of pitching changes in any given game.

But, I digress, again. My point is that a play, like Utley's slide, would not have been considered particularly nasty back in the day. Actually, it may have only been a hiccup in the commentary today, if Tejada had not been injured.

And infact, just in a game earlier this year, a slide made by Met's infielder Daniel Murphy in a game against the Dodgers was similiar to that of Utley's - late and outside of the bag

There is little doubt that Utley's slide was intended to break up a double play. It was not intended to hurt Tejada. Utley did not know that Tejada was making an awkward landing from catching the ball, and that the slide would turn into the collision that it was. He heard he was called out and left the field.

However, that call was reversed after the play went under review and revealed that Tejada's toe did not reach the bag, nor did he tag Utley.

Thus Utley was awarded his base, despite the fact that he also had failed to touch the bag. This, apparently, was by the rulebook. Had the call not been made, Utley most likely would have gone to the bag.

I have mixed feelings about Chief Baseball Officer Joe Torres' call to suspend Utley for the next two games. If Utley was within current rules of baseball, and it sounds as though he was, he should not be suspended. If he was not playing within the rules, he should have been called out for interference. You should not suspend someone for playing within the rules.

Mitchell wrote, "If Utley deserved to be suspended, shouldn't the umpiring crew get some sort of punishment for blowing the call? Seems to me that when you blow a call of this magnitude (and going by the rulebook, Utley should have been called out for interference), then the umpiring crew should get some sort of punishment."

However, I do feel that with the new "Buster Posey catcher's rule 7.13," to protect runners and catchers from collision injuries, a new ruling should be considered for sliding into bases. If that type of ruling were in effect, Utley would have been in error, and an umpire on the field could have made the call.

Utley has filed a protest for his suspension. As of Monday night, it had not been reviewed. Utley suited up and sat on the bench during Monday night's game in New York. Mets' fans booed him, when his introduction was made. They chanted for him to make an appearance in the game. They wanted revenge.

As the Mets blew the Dodgers away in a 13-7 win, Utley was not called upon to pinch hit, or to play. The Mets, no doubt, took added pleasure in their win. Certainly, the fans did.

This paper will have gone to the printer prior to Tuesday night's game. Let's hope for nothing, but a well-fought game and good sportsmanship.

Birthright Citizenship: Not Actually In the Constitution

A G Peterson

We did not hear Mr Trump's statement, but Birthright Citizenship Is Not Actually in the Constitution. Here are the facts which clarify and correct the misinformation which has brought about the controversy.

John Eastmen is the Henry Salvatori Professor of Law and Community Service, and former Dean, at Chapman University's Fowler School of Law. He is also the founding director of the Claremont Institute's Center for Constitutional Jurisprudence.

The question of whether birthright citizenship should be abolished is based on the faulty premise that our Constitution actually mandates it. In fact, the text of the 14th Amendment's citizenship clause reads: "All persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside."

That text has two requirements for citizenship — that an individual is born on U.S. soil; and that an individual is subject to the jurisdiction of the United States when born.

"Subject to the jurisdiction" means more than simply being present in the United States. When the 14th Amendment was being debated in the Senate, Senator Lyman Trumbull, a key figure in its drafting and adoption, stated that "subject to the jurisdiction" of the United States meant not "owing allegiance to anybody else."

The drafters of the clause modeled it off of the 1866 Civil Rights Act which grants citizenship to "all persons born in the United States and not subject to any foreign power."

And Senator Jacob Howard, who introduced the language of the clause on the floor of the Senate, contended that it should be interpreted in the same way as the requirement of the 1866 Civil Rights Act, which afforded citizenship to "all persons born in the United States and not subject to any foreign power."

The Supreme Court has never held otherwise. Some advocates for illegal immigrants point to the 1898 case of United States v. Wong Kim Ark, but that case merely held that a child born on U.S. soil to parents who were lawful, permanent (legally, "domiciled") residents was a citizen.

The broader language in the case suggesting that birth on U.S. soil is alone sufficient (thereby rendering the "subject to the jurisdiction" clause meaningless) is only dicta — not binding. The court did not specifically consider whether those born to parents who were in the United States unlawfully were automatically citizens.

The misunderstood policy of birthright citizenship provides a powerful magnet for people to violate our immigration laws and undermines the plenary power over naturalization that the Constitution explicitly gives to Congress. It is long past time to clarify that the 14th Amendment does not grant U.S. citizenship to the children of anyone just because they can manage to give birth on U.S. soil.

The Valley Voice welcomes guest commentary:

By mail: 3350 S. Fairway Street, Visalia, CA 93277 **By email:** editor@ourvalleyvoice.com

Comments & Letters

The comments below are from last issue's story, "Sources Explain Tulare Chief Breckinridge's Absence", posted on our website.

"well I have seen Jerry in Stockton a couple day's ago and had coffee with him."
— ***John Epperson***

"There'd be a better, through not perfect, case for keeping this secret, if the city wasn't paying the guy and he had the good sense to retire like Porterville's chief did under similarly fishy circumstances. And also if the sheriff wasn't implicated in a cover-up."
— ***Barry Caplan***

"Thank you Valley Voice for having the integrity to offer some explanation. Whether or not it is true, to offer no explanation for his absence leaves the situation wide open to speculation. Yes, it is a personal matter and I hope he gets the help he needs. But laws should be upheld regardless of who breaks those laws. It is a public concern that the County Sheriff is involved. Are these people above the law? I completely believe all of it."
— ***Loretta Feldstein***

"Needs to be relived of his duties and he is a community servant and should not be given special treatment. He needs to be made accountable for his actions just like an average citizen would have to be. Enough of politics and get down to. Business. I don't want the citizens of tulare to have to continuing supporting this kind of behavior. Shame on u Dorman. We should also consider another city manager with some cajones to deal with sensitive issues and not hide them. U have have cost several thousands of dollars in taxpayers monies."
— ***Caroline***

"Why did DA Tim Ward send Breckinridge case to Kern County instead of Kings County? Because Kings County doesn't tolerate anyone breaking the law and Breckinridge would have been held to answer. Breckinridge girlfriend does not decide if she wants to press charges or not. She was not only a victim but a material witness as well. If it were anybody else his girlfriend would have been prosecuted for obstructing justice. I guess certain people are allowed to be above the law. City manager Dorman and Breckinridge should be terminated for this cover up. Now it's the job of the Tulare City Council to handle this matter swiftly and properly."
— ***John***

"Why is this being tolerated? We would never teach our young people that is was right to break the law and then cover it up. Our city officials should all answer to higher standards and this Chief of Police should have been fired immediately. And to ask your staff and employees to keep silent while the offender continues to collect his pay all while his Department continues to work hard and put theirs lives on the line for us. Shame on our Mayor and City Managers for allowing this. Friendships with the Sheriff should not be a "Get Out of Jail Pass" either. The Citizens of Tulare need to be informed and take action against officials that do not perform their duties with honor and integrity."
— ***Darlene K***

"Finally an in-depth article on Chief Breckinridge and Dorman. Both need to go. Suggestion for next article would be the prolonged paid admin leave on Dorman's assistant City Manager Margot Farrlott (I am sure that I am not spelling her last name correctly, sorry about that). She has been on paid leave longer that the Chief or at the very least just as long. Good reporting."
— ***Barbara***

"And of course everything that is in print is the truth, such an unbiased article, citing so called facts, then armchair administrators thinking they know how the world according to garp is run, oh yea, hicktown, usa.."
— ***Carly Simon***

"Even if half of this is true, and I believe most, if not all of it is , then a demotion at the very least is called for, as for doubting the source cited for these claims, Valley Voice isn't the National Enquirer and I have full confidence in their judgement when using anonymous sources. And can anyone tell me what's more "hick" than being named after a mediocre has been singer?"
— ***Kelly***

"Judging by the number of comments to this article, this so called journalistic virtual paper won't be winning any Pulitzer's any time soon.
I didn't even realize the "Valley Voice" still existed till now.
For all the talk about the news media, much of it online, is there anyone so credulous as to believe they're getting unvarnished facts in a "news report".
I bet you think this post is about ya, don't ya."
— ***Carly Simon***

"This is sad. Not the Article. Valley Voice prints no fiction than any paper around. What's sad is that TPD officers know what happend and none of them are saying.
As a councilman in Tulare this article is useless. If you know something. Step up and do the right thing. If one cop watches another cop commit a crime and does or says NOTHING. I would say they are both bad cops.
I believe we have some good officers. If you are out there contact me. Tell me the truth. As a council member the CM doesn't have to tell us how he deals with personnel matters. If he instructed officers on how to do their job that night that's a problem for me.
So is there a good officer willing to do the right thing?
I'm my opinion who ever submitted this letter is a coward that needs to visit OZ and ask for courage."
— ***Carlton Jones, Vice-Mayor of Tulare***

"Bottom line is, being in the posistion of Chief of Police means you are suppose to be a leader, obviously at this point in time, for whatever reason Breckinridge is not up for the job. Its also obvious that there is a cover up of some sort, he wasnt injured on the job, if he had a family crisis we would have heard about it, im wondering what other secrets there are that would make protecting Breckinridge the road that Dorman chose to go down."
— ***Kelly***

"Carlton, I totally agree with your position on this matter. However, as a City Councilman, you have the right to put this issue on the CITY COUNCIL AGENDA, and don't forget, Mr. Don Dorman is your employee. There is always a paper trail that will lead to the true facts. It's a matter of doing some homework. However, the challenge of finding the true fact is due to the Officers Bill of Rights and "Code Blue". This reminds me of the million dollars hit the tax payer took with the proposed race track, where the secret deal to transfer the money from Tulare was arranged at the Fresno Airport instead of council chambers."
— ***Alberto***

"What a way to pass the buck Carlton….. Dorman works for the entire City Council and is answerable to each of you. Dorman's memos to all city employees (which included ALL policemen) instructed them to not talk about the Chief to anyone, even to each other or they would be fired. There is no Blue Wall Of Silence here…. there is a Dorman Wall Of Silence with encouragement of the City Council. Don't ask more of city employees than you do yourself. Your position as a council member is far more safe than theirs. Do the right thing and share ALL the general facts that you know about this matter. If you have never insisted on hearing the facts from Dorman it is never too late to go to him and find out. You can then share that info with the folks who actually voted you into the position of City Councilman."
— ***Barbara***

"This news paper sucks for printing an article without a source. I was hoping someone would come forward and tell what they know that's not the case. Anyone can send a letter to the "Print Anything" Valley Voice" and they will print it. If you are not man or woman enought to stand behind what you say, then don't say anything. The only person I can talk to is Don. From what I'm told. Who ever sent this letter in doesn't know anything. So if you sent this letter in and your not a liar. STEP UP!!!"
— ***Carlton Jones, Vice-Mayor of Tulare***

"Carlton–
This is the second time you've referenced a letter. Could you please describe what you mean by that? Thank you."
— ***Joseph Oldenbourg***

"Really? The newspaper sucks and is the "Print Anything" Valley Voice? You're kind of jumping to conclusions rather quickly don't you think, based on the assumption that this info was taken from a letter? Every newspaper in the media occasionally use anonymous sources, thats how the Watergate story was reported for months, remember Deep Throat?"
— ***Kelly***

"Gee Carlton…did this sucky newspaper keep you from your appointed duties as councilman at tonight's meeting?? Quote from VV "At tonight's regularly scheduled Tulare City Council meeting, Mayor David Macedo and Vice-Mayor Carlton Jones were not in attendance" Maybe you were headed to Oz yourself, not to get some courage, but a brain!?"
— ***Larry***

"I'm at my brothers wedding out of state. Out of every paper, news channel and radio. Why do you think VV was the only outlet these invisible 4 went to Larry?"
— ***Carlton Jones, Vice-Mayor of Tulare***

Comments & Letters

The comments below are from last issue's story, "Sources Explain Tulare Chief Breckinridge's Absence", posted on our website.

"Joseph. I'm referring to how V.V. Recorded this information. Was it a letter? Or an interview.
"John Doe". Something needs to be done
"Me". Ok LETS do it
"John Doe". Not me. You do it…..
Council members can not be involved with personnel issues.
Whistle blower protection rights is a federal right."

— ***Carlton Jones, Vice-Mayor of Tulare***

"Carlton–
Four people came forward to the paper, and the author interviewed them."

— ***Joseph Oldenbourg***

"I thought it was clear from what I read that the sources were interviewed and at least one was confirmed to be in or around law enforcement. How anyone would get the idea that all this information was received in a letter sent to the Valley Voice is beyond me. Maybe the sources cut out letters from magazines and pieced together the words! What a assumption! The only thing I can complain about is how the article states since Breckinridge hasn't been seen, he must be in rehab, okay…….really? For 5 months? I seriously doubt that."

— ***Kelly***

"Kelly. How is any of this confirmed? What does "in or around law enforcement" mean? I can tell you it doesnt mean anything in court.
As a citizen I think Jerry mad a huge mistake and it's being swept under the rug I think other officers know the truth.
As a council member what I think about what happend with Jerry doesn't matter. We only deal with the CM. I have asked. I can say someone is lying. If you're telling the truth, why hide who you are?"

— ***Carlton Jones, Vice-Mayor of Tulare***

"Carlton,
You know u have the power to speak and interview Don Dorman. You have known about this incident for months. This paper is actually one of the more respected papers in our community. Don't blame the paper for reporting a story that should have been exposed months ago. It's out there now. The powers that be wanted this thing to just disappear. Well it hasn't. The city has a serious problem & a possible cover up of a crime involving the Chief and some of his command staff & The City Manager. The possible D U I is a misdemeanor, the cover up is a Felony. No one is going to come forward to the Council for fear of what being persecuted and villified and being accused of having some kind of agenda (Federal Whistle Blower Act) Lol….. With what has gone on in the past in this community with the Politics and past events, you and the council don't obviously have the trust of the people interviewed for this article to come forward to u or the council. You have the story now, interview Dorman. If you continue to vilify the paper and use the excuse that if you don't personally have a named source there is nothing you can do. You lose your credibility with the public. You don't need that named source to put it on the councils agenda (You have this story published here) and Bring Dorman in and have him explain to the council. Do the right thing for the citizens of Tulare, they deserve your best! If we don't get the best representation, then The Attorney Generals Office needs to be contacted so this can be investigated properly. The community deserves the truth."

— ***Redskins Fan***

"Redskins Fan. Tulare has a lot of redskin fans. What's your name? You say we have the story. Where I'm from. Telling a story is telling a lie especially when you say "don't tell them I said it".
Stop hiding. Come out of your hole
My name is Carlton Jones. Henry's son. Class of 91. TFD to FFD. a proud Tularean and I aprove this message.
Valley Voice is a news paper not an attorney. They have every right to say where they got this information and not use fake names"

— ***Carlton Jones, Vice-Mayor of Tulare***

"Carlton why don't you quit trying to dig yourself out of that hole you stepped into and start using that God-given brain that voters thought you had. If you truly can't recognize that you and your City Manager and fellow City Council members are perpetuating a cover-up of possible wrong doings then I seriously question your credibility as a leader in our community. You are being asked to be the "Whistle Blower" by the citizens who voted you into your seat at the City Council table. Quit trying to shoot the messenger (Valley Voice and other respectable news outlets) and state your true position…."I don't know anything…I don't want to know anything….I will refuse to say anything if I ever do find out anything".

— ***Barbara***

"I'm not it a hole.
I can't blow the whistle. I wasn't there.
Don't say 4 people came forward if they went to Valley Voice. I call that 4 people are still hiding the facts. They are in a hole. Not me. You know who I am. I'm not using a fake name and I'm not taking my comments to someone else to say them on my behalf.
If you use a fake name or you are one of these mistical 4. You are in a hole!!! Not me. Sometimes it take courage to raise your hand and say "this is what happened". As a public servant you disrespect your oath when you don't. When you keep your mouth shut because you think it will hurt your promotional opportunity. You are a good ole boy and lack integrity.
The respectable media outlets didn't cover this. I doubt they will unless they know the source."

— ***Carlton Jones, Vice-Mayor of Tulare***

"Wow! As a voter in Carlton's district I want to take this time to thank him for affording me the opportunity to gain access into his thought processing capabilities and his mind set."

— ***Barbara***

"At the end of the day. Someone made a mistake. Let's focus on that. Barbara it's ok if you don't agree with me but. The sad truth is. This anonymous information is circumstantial and hearsay. As an elected official in your district we are all forwarded the same respect. If someone tells me you are watering on your off day. I wouldn't just mail you a ticket. I'll call and ask you. And I would go check and see.
So know that I have to be far. Even when I would want to just fire someone"

— ***Carlton Jones, Vice-Mayor of Tulare***

"Fair enough Carlton. But at the end of the day Pandora's box has been opened and the City cannot put back into that box all the information that has been made public thus far, no matter how much some would like to do so. I believe that you just might be the only one sitting on that City Council who supports the public's right to know. So unless I am wrong (and I hope I am not) I will be waiting for you to somehow find a legal and ethical way to apprise citizens of Tulare of just what has been going on.
After all Carlton, Dorman works for you…not the other way around and the only way you can be fired is by the voters. So far you are one up on the other council members as at least you are communicating with the public and they are not."

— ***Barbara***

"As a drug and alcohol counselor in Tulare county, I am amazed at all the addict behaviors going on and the codependent enabling. I work with teenagers that have more backbone than these people. OWN YOUR OWN JUNK… CLEAN UP YOUR SIDE OF THE STREET…YOU ARE ONLY AS SICK AS YOUR SECRETS. I struggle to get teens to live by these simple instructions. I am absolutely disgusted that people in your position can justify a criminal conspiracy to cover up domestic violence and DUI. NO WONDER OUR COMMUNITY HAD AN ARREST OF 52 GANG MEMBERS!! Let's be sure to shine the light on that, so we can divert attention away from the criminal activity going on with the City Council. I love my community. Can someone please make this right!"

— ***Diane Thompson***

"This act started with one person, Jerry. The first mistake is his. The next mistake is what happened when he was confronted by another officer. No I don't know what happened. I have no way of finding out. You should all ask Jerry. I will do the same. What I can ask is are we rewarding bad behavior. I hope we are not and plan to stop it if we are.
This is not a sign of council committing a crime. It's all on Jerry. I feel he owes the city an apology. But to "Humble" you comments are tasteless. I see why you hide behind a fake name. If you want to see the mayor dirty go, out to his livestock yard."

— ***Carlton Jones, Vice-Mayor of Tulare***

"This is easy. The council can go into closde session, and direct the CM to tell them what the **** is going on. As the ultimate city authority, they have every right to know."

— ***Quando***

"That's not true. Council has no right to question the CM on day to day operations. We can question how he deals with them but. We can't get involved with personnel matters."

— ***Carlton Jones, Vice-Mayor of Tulare***

Comment online, on Facebook, and through Letters to the Editor

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Drill

Continued from p. 7

both the seriousness of the problem and the obvious solution.

"We're going to raise $40,000 to deepen his wells, and this is how we're going to do it. I'm going to offer signed and numbered lithographs of four of my paintings, one for each foot of well drilled, which is around $50. All we need is to get the word out," he said prophetically. Buxman then set about contacting his wide network of admirers and supporters. Money began arriving immediately.

"Approaching Rain" is the title of one of the paintings reproduced as lithographs that Buxman is giving in exchange for financial contributions to deepen Scott's wells. This painting shows a small farm against a darkened horizon that could bring disaster as well as blessing. "After the Rain," "Autumn Afternoon," and "Homestead" (which portrays raisins drying in the sun,) are the titles of the other three.

These four paintings are from the 1980's and were chosen for reproduction because Buxman felt they best represented both his style and his subject. Normally these lithographs sell for several hundred dollars each. As a quartet, they represent the passion and skill of this artist/tree fruit grower who knows the lay of our land like no other.

If you'd like to contribute, send your checks to Paul Buxman, Sweet Home Ranch, 4399 Ave. 400, Dinuba CA 93618. Make the checks payable to "Will Scott, Jr.," with "well fund" or "Drill for Will" written in the memo space. Include your name, address and phone number to arrange for pick-up of the lithographs. Send $50 for one lithograph, or collect all four for a $200 contribution. Help save the human heart of our farmscapes and have that vision to hang on the wall in return.

Trudy Wischemann is a rural advocate who writes a column for the Foothills Sun-Gazette (visit www.trudysnotesfromhome.blogspot.com.)

Paul Buxman's "House with Twin Gables," 1992.

Cleanup

Continued from p. 1

"We're looking to Dow and Shell because there was no need for TCP in this product," Chapman said. "It wasn't the active ingredient. It's a design defect." Internal memos dating back decades show the companies believed TCP was a "garbage" chemical. Experts who have worked in the field say adding chemicals that were essentially waste products to other products in order to avoid the cost of remediation was a common practice at the time.

Both Chapman and Robins say their clients, as well as those who rely on them for drinking water, were the victims of the companies' illegal actions. The lawsuits, they say, were filed in the hope of shifting the cost of cleanup off the backs of taxpayers.

"This water needs to be cleaned up and is going to be cleaned up one way or another. They should pay for it," said Chapman. "That's our purpose, to make sure the ratepayers shouldn't have to pay for someone else's wrongdoing."

200-year half-life

In the Tulare case, the suit seeks to force the defendants to cover the cost of keeping TCP out of users' tap water now and as long as it lingers in the ground.

"The best outcome for the City of Tulare would be recovery of funds that are sufficient to pay for the installation of effective treatment to remove this contaminant from the water to non-detectable levels," said Robins

To make that happen, the wells where TCP has been detected will have to be fitted with granulated activated carbon filters. Robins also said those responsible for the contamination should also be forced to pay for maintenance of those filters "as long as it takes, so people in Tulare won't have to be exposed to this contaminant."

That could be quite a long time.

"The half-life of TCP in groundwater varies, but it's on the order of 200 years. This is a very, very persistent chemical," said Robins. "Our experts say, and what Dow and Shell certainly knew, if you include or don't remove a chemical that's this persistent, and inject it in the ground, it's literally a recipe for disaster."

No Immediate Threat

While contamination occurred during the 1970's and '80s, TCP wasn't listed as harmful by the state until 1999. It was soon after that the lawsuits began, as water suppliers sought to protect their users from the chemical's uncertain effects on humans. Those using the water should not be concerned about an immediate threat.

"This chemical has never been proven to make humans sick," said Robins, who added at least one jury found TCP responsible for a case of human cancer. "The evidence in this case is animal evidence" said Robins, who added at least one jury found TCP responsible for a case of human cancer. "It's a chronic, long-term risk. It's much more about preventing people from getting sick. The only way people are going to get sick is if the cities don't do anything about it, and the they are."

The state Office of Health Hazard Assessment has set a "public health goal" of seven parts per trillion for TCP, citing "significant increases in tumors" observed in lab animals exposed to the chemical. While evidence of increased cancer in humans is "lacking," this is because trials using human subjects cannot be performed.

Valley Voice
Valley Scene
15 October, 2015

Francesca dePascuale. © The Philadelphia Youth Orchestra

Music at the Main Lands International Stars

Bill Haxton

Music at the Main, now entering its sixth year in Tulare County, has broken through to national recognition for its top tier chamber music program. At last summer's Aspen Music Festival, several of the most world's most sought after soloists and music pedagogues had heard about the program. One commented that it may provide a model that could be replicated nationally.

From the beginning, Music at the Main has striven to give young prodigy musicians a chance to perform before live audiences just before they launch their professional careers. Our area benefits because we get to hear the next generation of international stars at very affordable prices. The performers benefit because they get valuable touring experience as well as an opportunity to explore new pieces of music. Music at the Main's effort toward this end is bearing real results.

Musicians who have performed here in the past have gone on to win top prizes at the Tchaikovsky Violin Competition in Russia, the Queen Elisabeth Violin Competition in Belgium, the Jacques Lancelot Clarinet Competition in France and the Naumberg Cello Competition in New York City.

And then there's Simone Porter, who first performed here in 2010 at age 13. This year, Ms. Porter soloed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic under Gustavo Dudamel, receiving rave reviews that are usually reserved for seasoned violinists with years of concert experience. The next day, she flew to Colombia, South America for a special concert there.

Even with those remarkable Music at the Main alumni, this year marks the crossing of a major threshold. Three of North America's finest young violinists will each present a full solo concert.

Canadian violin phenomenon Blake Pouliot opens the season on November 14 in Three Rivers

MAIN continued on **27 »**

The Rocky Horror Show Comes to Visalia

Nancy Holley

The Rocky Horror Show aficionados are in for a great treat at the Ice House Theatre in Visalia beginning Friday, October 16. *Rocky Horror* opened to great acclaim more than 40 years ago in London and still enjoys fan following around the world.

Co-director Elicia Russel exclaims excitedly, "I started seeing *Rocky Horror* when I was in high school in the 1970's. It was exciting to be interactive at the movies. People came dressed in costume and stood in front of the screen reenacting the songs and dances."

Despite the popular movie version, *Rocky Horror* was originally a stage musical, a spoof of the B-rated horror movies that were the rage from the 1940's to the 1970's.

"It includes rock 'n roll from the era. You can hear that music throughout the show," comments co-director Henry Ralston. "I was part of the next generation of *Rocky Horror* fans."

The cult following of *Rocky Horror* seems to know no bounds. Cast members, as young as 16, are wild fans of the show and very excited to be part of the current presentation.

In step with tradition, the Visalia Players' production will be interactive with audience participation. To encourage patrons to join in the fun (as if that might be necessary), prop bags will be available for purchase.

The cast of 20 includes Ice House veterans as well as newcomers.

Dr. Frank-N-Furter, the zany transvestite owner of the castle, is aptly portrayed by Sean Hopper, who was seen at the Ice House in *The Spelling Bee* and *Little Shop of Horrors.* Sean likes portraying characters "that make me do things I've never done before. Dr. Frank-N-Furter is no exception."

Janet Pursell is making her Ice House debut as the naïve Janet, who "learns she can be herself and embrace her sexuality. It is a great evolution."

Her equally naïve fiancée Brad is played by Corey Ralston, who has appeared in and directed numerous Visalia Players' productions. Ralston has been obsessed by *Rocky Horror* since high school.

"I always wanted to play Brad and never thought it would happen. Now it has, and it is so exciting."

The show takes its name from the blonde, buff male created by Dr. Frank-N-Furter – Rocky Horror. Bailey Beach is very excited to be Rocky. "In the movie Rocky doesn't talk, but in the play he expresses himself. Initially, it was alarming to learn that I was going to be this sexual person, but it's okay now." Bailey last appeared at the Ice House in *The Laramie Project.*

The Rocky Horror Show runs for three weekends at the Ice House Theater at Race and Santa Fe in Visalia.

Evening performances are at 7:30pm on October 16, 17, 23, 24, and 30 and matinees are at 2pm on October 18, 25, and November 1.

A special show is scheduled for October 31 at midnight.

The show contains adult content, language, and partial nudity.

To purchase tickets go to the Visalia Players' website at www.visaliaplayers.org, their Facebook page, Visalia Community Players or call (559) 734-3900.

A wide variety of products, handwoven by Handweavers of the Valley members, are available for purchase at the annual Harvest of Handwovens show. Photo by Nikki Crain.

Exeter Hosts 36th Annual Harvest of Handwovens

Staff Reports

The 36th Annual Harvest of Handwovens, presented by Handweavers of the Valley, comes to the Exeter Memorial Building on Saturday, October 24.

"This show and sale has become increasingly popular in recent years and rivals shows you might expect to find in the San Francisco or Los Angeles areas," said Nikki Crain, show publicity chair.

Harvest of Handwovens showcases work from some of the club's 100 members including towels, scarves, shawls, blankets, rugs, saddle blankets, jewelry, baskets, gourds and more, available for purchase. This is a great opportunity to shop for holiday gifts, as well as yourself, but also to learn about many types of weaving crafts, as well as a chance to purchase equipment and supplies.

Spectators can watch demonstrations of spinning, weaving, felting, bead weaving, fiber preparation, color-blending techniques and dyeing of fibers and yarns. Exquisite pine needle baskets and weaving on gourds will also be featured with basket making demonstrations against a backdrop of completed, award-winning work.

Village Spinning and Weaving from Solvang will return with an array of beautiful weaving and knitting yarns as well as fiber, equipment and books. The shop also carries an extensive line of spinning wheels and looms.

Check in with the Weaver's Attic for great prices on equipment and project remnants at great prices.

Show entrants and items for sale have to follow careful directions created by the club. Everything must be at least 50% handwoven and anything that is knit or crocheted, must be done with fiber that is 100% handspun, Crain said.

The goal of the club, she said,

HANDWOVEN continued on **27 »**

VRM Banquet Oct. 20

The theme of this year's Visalia Rescue Mission (VRM) banquet is Hope the Strong Anchor.

This represents the new leadership at VRM as well as new questions, said Ryan Stillwater, VRM director of community engagement. Stillwater has been with VRM for a couple of years and along with the newly named executive director, Al Oliver, has new thoughts and questions to address as the mission moves forward.

"Hope is the anchor of the entire ministry," Stillwater said. "It is equally enlightening and beneficial."

The banquet is open to anyone with an interest in homelessness, hunger and substance abuse in the local community along with an interest in how to help alleviate the problems with the mission. It is a time to learn VRM's place in the community, what it does and how anyone may be able to help.

"At the end of the day," Stillwater said, "the question we ask ourselves is…do our guests and residents feel a greater sense of hope because we're here? I think at a very basic level, providing hope is something the community really resonates with. In some way, this event is an opportunity to answer the question prompted by our own slogan: What is hope and restoration? What exactly does that look like?"

The 6:30-8pm banquet is at the Gateway Church in Visalia. Tickets, which include dinner, are $30, or $210 for a table of eight and may be purchased at www.vrm.org/events, at the mission's office, 500 E. Race St., or by phone, (559) 740-4178.

Neighborhood Bookstore at Taste the Arts

Nancy Holley

Looking for interesting conversations and/or a place to peruse books at your leisure? Then, Neighborhood Bookstore's booth at Taste the Arts on Saturday, October 17 is for you.

Neighborhood Bookstore has grown from a seed sown by Carole Firstman and Irene Morse at last year's Taste the Arts to a forum where a dozen or more local authors can showcase their works. Firstman noted, "Publicity for Tulare and Kings County writers is limited since no major bookstore remains in the area."

Author Gloria Getman

Frequently, whether self-published or published by standard publishing houses, the marketing of books by unknown authors is minimal or non-existent. Unknown authors suddenly find themselves in an arena requiring marketing skills and venues which may be unfamiliar.

Firstman and Morse conceived Neighborhood Bookstore as an avenue to help the works of local authors appear before the public. Through boutiques for the holidays of 2014 and the spring of 2015, Neighborhood Bookstore began to grow.

The Arts Consortium's Taste the Arts is a perfect partner for Neighborhood Bookstore. The Arts Consortium provides the advertising for the event, and for a small fee the authors associated with Neighborhood Bookstore can share a space that will be on the path of crowds enjoying Taste the Arts on a fall afternoon.

The participants of Neighborhood Bookstore are fluid as the needs of authors change, but joining Firstman and Morse as regulars are Winnie Furrer, a memoir writer, and Gloria Getman, whose passion is mystery.

At Taste the Arts, books from both fiction and non-fiction genres will be available. Within the fiction category, in addition to Getman's mysteries, Judith Boling and Stephanie Carroll present historical fiction, Jesalyn Harper provides fantasy, and Dominique Vaughn offers poetry.

On the non-fiction side are memoirs by Firstman and Furrer, travel exposes by Morse, and literary non-fiction from John Fisher and Kathy Stevens. Jane Thomas' incredible photography completes Neighborhood Bookstore's offerings.

"People have different comfort levels. Some want to stroll around looking at books, while others are interested in meeting and engaging with the authors. Neighborhood Bookstore will provide both opportunities," explained Firstman.

The authors will be available to sign books. Places to sit and leaf through works will be provided. Neighborhood Bookstore's booth will be inviting and interesting. The literary artists and photographer invite you to enjoy the ambiance of their booth.

6th Annual Taste the Arts

Returning to downtown Visalia on October 17 between 12pm and 6pm, the main attraction is the street fair with more than 70 artists. To see a complete line up of artists, visit Facebook.com/TastetheArts.

Led by Erik Gonzalez, the Urbanists Art Collective members return to the Old Lumberyard for a full day of interactive workshops, demonstrations, and music. Pro Youth Heart is providing interactive activities for kids of all ages and a display of student photography. Visalia Farmers Market (VFMA) brings back the popular Fun with Food contest. Each contestant may choose to make their sculpture at home and bring the entry during competition hours or create the sculpture on site with produce provide by VFMA during competition hours. Hide Out aka Confidence Booth, created by artist Bachrun Lomele, is an interactive art installation exploring issues of privacy, data collection, and scrambled understanding. A person attempts to express his inner life to the world, but what comes out is unrecognizable to himself, misunderstood by others, and potentially usurped for obscure purposes. The Task Party, from the imagination of artist Oliver Herring provides a simple structure and a few rules to create a platform for people to express and test their own ideas. The Photography Demonstration at Garden Street Plaza. Local photographer and videographer Phet Khamsaysoury has partnered with Salon Estes to present a live photography demonstration featuring students from Salon Estes with avant-garde hair styling.

Motown Comes to Lindsay

Staff Reports

The Lindsay Community Theater Concert Series presents The Motown/Oldies Review starring Harold Lyons, formerly of Little Sammy and the Iridescence. Lyons will be joined by William Morris and Buddy Higgins, both accomplished and experienced singers. The concert is Saturday, October 17 at 7:30pm at the Lindsay Community Theater.

"I was raised in South Central Los Angeles with four brothers during the golden age of Motown and fading sounds of the '50s "do wop," Lyons said. "We lived three houses down from a gentleman by the name of Clyde Tillis. Clyde was a member of the singing group 'The Hollywood Flames' who recorded the song Buzz Buzz Buzz. A group of us kids used to sit outside on his porch and listen to them rehearse, along with other famous groups and artists such as: the Penguins, Chuck Berry, Fats Domino, Little Richard, Johnny Otis and others. We were so inspired.

"By the time we were teenagers, my brothers and I started singing in our neighborhood and trying to form a group of our own. We finally formed a group called Little Sam and the Iridescence. Our group matured and gained more popularity, and eventually we had the privilege of performing with top entertainers like the Temptations, Ike and Tina Turner, Lou Rawls, Jerry Butler and Nancy Wilson. We also performed with Johnny Rivers and Sonny King at the Sands Hotel in Las Vegas. However, our most memorable moment was at the Los Angeles Sports Arena where we opened for James Brown in 1966. A while later we signed a deal with Capital Records and recorded three songs, *While The City Sleeps*, *Without My Sugar*, and *Punish Me*.

"Although we never made it to stardom, I don't regret for a moment the journey we took. I experienced things that I never thought I would, and went places I never thought I would go. Performing and being on the big stage was everything to me at the time. However, life goes on, and we moved on to new journeys in life. I met my beautiful wife (after she saw me performing with the Temptations), and we have been married since 1970, with four children, and 10 grandchildren. I have been able to pass on my love of music to all of them. Some of my favorite times were our family night jam sessions, with each one doing their own thing, and just enjoying the music. It was fun times that I wished would never end.

"I think that's what entertainers are all about; enjoying what they do and bringing into someone's heart a good feeling, an old memory, or, even making a new one. And I hope to be able to do that for as long as I can."

The Lindsay Community Theater is located at 190 N Elmwood in the heart of downtown Lindsay. Tickets are $20 and can be purchased online at lindsaycommunitytheater.com, or they can be purchased at the door the night of the event. Box office opens at 6:30 pm. For more information, call 284 2223.

Spanspek Music and Arts Festival

Eleven Central Valley bands, dozens of artists convene in Orosi

Staff Reports

Roots-rock, indie, punk, hip-hop. Larger than life sculptures, live painting, youth creativity. For its 10th year, the Spanspek Music and Arts Festival returns to the Orosi Memorial Hall on Friday, October 24, with 11 local bands and DJs, and dozens of local artists.

The festival – a one-of-a-kind event for the northern Tulare County communities of Cutler and Orosi, staffed entirely by volunteers – showcases independent music on three stages, as well as live collaborative artworks and installations from rising stars across the Central Valley. The intimate venue gives attendees the chance to interact with the artists and enjoy a front-row seat to performances from the musicians.

This year's music acts will include roots-rock trio Lance Canales & the Flood, whose recent album The Blessing & the Curse is making inroads on European music charts. Sanger rapper Kooleidoscope, recently featured on NPR's AltLatino podcast, will be performing for the first time with a live band made up of members of the Dinuba hip-hop collective, Roach Collection. Fresno progressive/experimental rockers, Light Thieves, recently back from a statewide tour, will perform tracks from their upcoming sophomore effort.

Also performing are Reedley instrumental band, Tokyo Death March, who will be reuniting for one night only after a four year absence. Lastly, the festival will feature an inaugural DJ stage, to include a rare performance by famed Valley DJ/producer, Jukebawks, who has worked with up-and-coming rappers Fashawn, Zee Will, and Gentle Jamie.

This year's art offerings will feature the unveiling of a newly-commissioned piece from Fresno artist Abigail Jansen, who recently participated in collaborative murals for the Arte America's Dia de los Muertos exhibit. Also in attendance will be the Urbanists Collective, a Visalia group that promotes urban art in collaboration with the Tulare County Arts Consortium.

Jose Guadalupe Garcia will be on hand, showcasing his larger-than-life metal sculptures, some of which have won Best of Show awards at fairs all over the Central Valley. Fresno, by way of Los Angeles, conceptual artist Teresa Flores will also be returning, bringing her unique sensibility, which has resulted in works that include paintings of apple cores and the establishment of a fully-operational "experimental quesadilla bar." And, for the fifth year in a row, the works of Orosi High School students will also be displayed, with all proceeds from the sale of student artwork going directly to the students.

The all-ages festival starts at 5:30pm. Tickets cost $5 at the door. The festival will offer special incentives for all who attend. With the price of admission attendees will receive a download code for a free exclusive compilation album of music from Spanspek bands of years past. Craft beer will also be on tap for people 21 and over.

Orosi-natives Cristobal Carrillo and Israel Flores founded the Spanspek Festival in 2006 as a way to actively encourage the Cutler-Orosi community to create and share independent music and art. Proceeds from the festival fund art and music scholarships at Orosi High School, artist commissions and community concerts in Cutler-Orosi.

"By lighting a creative spark in others," Carrillo says, "we hope to make Cutler-Orosi a better place to live."

Visit spanspekfestival.com for more details, including band and artist profiles.

Next deadline: October 29

Great Conversations

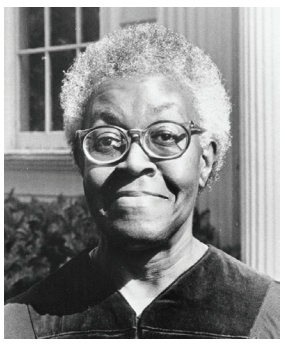
Poetry and Politics: The Case of the Sonnet

Joseph R. Teller

Let's face it: most of us are intimidated by poetry because we "don't get it." But the good news is that poetry doesn't have to be difficult to understand and enjoy. In fact, for most of Western history, poetry was simply another form of rhetoric: a way of using language to communicate a message, to appeal to our love of beauty, and to move our intellect and emotions. Indeed, poetry was not merely part of everyday life (ballads, songs, and drama were enjoyed by literate and illiterate alike); it could also be a way of moving people to action.

Poet Countee Cullen

This week the Great Books group at COS discussed four sonnets by 20th century African-American poets Countee Cullen and Gwendolyn Brooks, and Jamaican-American poet Claude McKay. In English, the sonnet form goes back to the 16th century. Adapted from Italian poets, the sonnet consists of 14 lines written in a strict rhyme scheme (the two major schemes are Italian and Shakespearean, though Shakespeare didn't invent it).



Poet Gwendolyn Brooks

Sonnets are highly compressed and intense, posing a difficult problem and then dramatizing a moment of insight. Often associated with erotic love, the sonnet can be turned to a variety of purposes. Such is the case in Claude McKay's sonnets, one of which begins with a series of bold questions about racial violence: "Think you I am not fiend and savage too? / Think you I could not arm me with a gun / And shoot down ten of you for every one / Of my black brothers murdered, burnt by you?"

A few lines later the poet rejects this initial threat, claiming that God has placed the poet's black face "among the white / For thee to prove thyself of higher worth; Before the world is swallowed up in night, / To show thy little lamp: go forth, go forth!" Beginning with a threat of violence, the sonnet turns the black/white of racial violence into a metaphysical claim of human dignity—arguing that the "dusky face" of the black poet serves as a "light" shining brighter than "the white."

A similar sonnet by Countee Cullen begins by posing the age-old question: why does God permit evil? But in the final lines, the sonnet turns to the most perplexing question of all: "Yet do I marvel at this curious thing: / To make a poet black, and bid him sing!" These lines force us to see the poet's broader cultural reality—the difficulties and tensions involved in being an African-American poet in early 20th century America.

Gwendolyn Brooks also explores the role of the black poet within American society in her poem "First Fight," in which she suggests that while black artists should "ply the slipping string / With feathery sorcery" and "Devote / The bow to silks and honey," ultimately, black artists might have to do something else before they can make real art: "Win war. Rise bloody, maybe not too late / For having first to civilize a space / Wherein to play your violin with grace."

These sonnets capture a central artistic and cultural conflict: in a culture with a history of racism, how should black poets "sing"? What kind of art can such poets make? One answer—not the only one—is to adapt poetic forms like the sonnet and turn them to contemporary political and cultural problems. By doing this, poets like McKay, Brooks, and Cullen show us that poetry does not have to be a dead and purely academic thing, but a living, breathing vehicle for self-expression, identity, and cultural examination—an art form that can open our eyes to the world around us and move us to change it.

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Calendar

Mondays: Bridge Club, 9:30am-2pm
210 W Center Street Visalia, CA 93291 Admission is free. For additional information call: Joan Dinwiddie @ 732-0855

Mondays: Knitters, 10am-12:30pm
210 W Center Street Visalia, CA 93291. Everyone's welcome.

Fridays: Women's Morning Bible Study, 9am-Noon
210 W Center Street Visalia, CA 93291. For additional information call: 739-9010

Saturdays starting August 22: Dog Obedience Course, 9-10am
6-week Basic Manner course, Exeter City Park. $120/6-week-course. For more information, call (559) 568-8863 or email fortheloveofdg@doglover.com.

1st and 3rd Thursdays: Central Valley Tea Party Meetings, 6pm
819 West Visalia Road, Farmersville.

Through October 28: Free Fly Casting Instruction, 6-7pm
Kaweah Fly Fishers are offering fly casting lessons at Del Lago Park in Tulare every Wednesday evening until October 28. Rods and reels will be supplied or you may bring your own.

OCTOBER

October 15 – November 15: "Two Views: CA Gold" Jeri Burzin & Beckie Nava
At the Tulare Historical Museum, 444 West Tulare Avenue inTulare. Artist Reception: Thursday, October 15, 5pm – 7pm. Gallery Hours: Thursday – Sunday, 10am – 4pm.

October 15: Happy Hearts Golf Tournament, 10am-5pm
At the Ridge Creek Dinuba Golf Club, 3018 Ridge Creek Drive in Dinuba. 10am – Check In • 11am – Shotgun. Please register by September 30, 2015. $125 per player includes: green fees, range balls, cart, and dinner.

October 16: Bob Gary Memorial Golf Tournament and Crab Feed, 10:30am (Crab Feed 5pm)
The Visalia Breakfast Rotary will hold a golf tournament in honor of past charter member Bob Gary as a fundraiser for "Heart Safe Community." The tournament will be at Valley Oaks Golf Course, followed by a crab feed at the Holiday Inn. To register contact Bill Bland for an entry form at 269-5986.

October 16: Music for the Classical Guitar, 12:05pm, Porterville College Room CA-2
Dr. Corey Whitehead, Associate Professor of Music and Head of Guitar Studies at California State University, Fresno, will perform along with three of his talented students (Patrick Aguirre, Edgar Contreras and Masters Candidate Tyler Williams). Solo and guitar ensemble literature will include pieces by Francisco Tarrega, Manolo Sanlucar, Ricardo Marlow, Michael Praetorius, Isaac Albeniz and J. S. Bach. Event is free and open to the public.

October 16: Christmas In October! Holiday Boutique at the Exeter Woman's Club
Friday, October 16th from 5:30 to 9pm and Saturday, October 17th from 10am to 5:30pm at the Exeter Womans's Club, 201 N. Kaweah, Exeter. There will be vendors, crafts, appetizers and a raffle. Come and enjoy the fun and do some early Christmas Shopping! For more information, call (559) 909-4135.

October 16: Purple Party, 7-10pm
October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and on Friday, October 16, we're hosting The Purple Party. Join us to celebrate survivors and be part of Family Services' efforts to end domestic violence in our community. Event proceeds will benefit Karen's House, our 30-bed emergency domestic violence shelter for women and children fleeing abuse. This evening of fun at the Visalia Rawhide Hall of Fame Club will feature hors d'oeuvres, cocktails, a purple photo booth, a silent auction, and the critical impact of Family Services' prevention and intervention programs for local survivors and their children. Tickets are $30, For more information call Erica Tootle at 559-732-1970.

October 16: Run 4 Cover performs a benefit show for FoodLink of Tulare County, 8:30pm
Celebrate World Food Day with FoodLink for Tulare County and the Cellar Door as Run4Cover takes the stage Friday, October 16th. On sale now at the Cellar Door and on www.foodlinktc.org, VIP tickets are $25 and feature pre-show entry at 7:30pm with a VIP reception, appetizers and reserved seating. Doors open to the general public at 8:30pm with a $12 cover charge at the door. To purchase tickets, visit www.foodlinktc.org or visit the Cellar Door in downtown Visalia. For more information, contact FoodLink for Tulare County at (559) 651-3663. Visit FoodLink online at www.foodlinktc.org, on Facebook and on Twitter @FoodLinkTC.

October 17 & 18: 35th Annual Springville Apple Festival
Sponsored by the Springville Community Club, the Apple Festival is held annually, the third weekend in October, and attracts in excess of 20,000 guests each year. The Apple Festival is a non-profit, self sustaining, family oriented festival that is: Safe, friendly, entertaining and appealing to all age groups, and is committed to being a drug and alcohol free festival.

The Festival consists of over 200 booths. Craft booths are juried to ensure quality merchandise, selling handcrafted, hand-embellished arts and crafts items. Food booths offer a large variety of choices. Entertainment consists of; Music, kid's games, carnival-type rides and clowns. The Festival has activities for all age groups; The Apple Run 5K, 10K, and Kid's runs, plus the 2-mile walk on Saturday morning, and the Annual Fat Tire Classic Mountain Bike Race on Sunday morning. The Fat Tire Classic is a challenging and scenic 7-mile mountain ride for adults, with a well-supervised and easier course for children. Free parking is available at the Rodeo Grounds, with free shuttle service, compliments of Eagle Mountain Casino, to and from the downtown area. For more information call 202-6904.

October 17: Classic Car Show, 10am-2pm
Presented by Westgate Gardens Care Center, the show will be at 4525 W. Tulare Avenue in Visalia. Free registration--and no deadline--for all vehicles. Car show T-shirts $10 each. For more information call Shayna Fabre at either 733-0901 or 977-6812.

October 17: Car Show & Fall Festival, Noon-5pm
To be held at the Hanford Mall. Contact Best of Show Magazine. Vehicle registration 667-0606. Vendor info 859-3464 or 859-9631. Car/truck registration $30. Bike/motorcycle registration $20. Free admission to the public.

October 17: Visalia Library "True Zoo To You" With Author Jean Chaffee, 7pm
The Friends of the Tulare County Library invite children of all ages to an exciting, educational, enjoyable evening with the "True Zoo To You" children's book series author Jean Chaffee. Join us to hear all about the beloved animals from the Fresno Chaffee Zoo, including Nosey the Elephant, Longo the Giraffe and many more. This free event takes place after closing at the Visalia Branch Library on Saturday, October 17, at 7:00 pm. For more information, call the Tulare County Library's Visalia Branch at 559-713-2709, visit us online at www.tularecountylibrary.org, or stop by 200 W Oak Avenue in Visalia.

October 18: Family Builders Foster Care 2nd Annual Golf Tournament, 1pm
At the Exeter Golf Course, 510 W. Visalia Rd. Cost is $50 per person. 1 pm is check in time and includes a Tri Tip dinner, 18 holes of golf and lots of fun! Sign up deadline is October 12th. For more information, contact Selena McNair at (559) 685-1200.

October 20: League of Women Voters Meeting, 11:45am
The League of Women Voters of Tulare County will meet Tuesday, October 20 at 11:45 a.m. in Sue Sa's Club House, 699 W. Center. The program will be a National League Study - MONEY IN POLITICS. Under the League's positions, we have done a study on Campaign Finance. The consensus was to improve methods of financing political campaigns to insure citizen's rights to know, combat corruption and undue influence and enable candidates to compete equitably for public office. The committee will do an update to understand the extent to which political campaigns are protected speech under the First Amendment. A fixed price lunch for $13.00 inc.tax and tip will be served. Reservations are required and the public is welcome. Contact newellgb@hotmail.com or call 732-1251.

Visalia Music School'
Blues" is the newest
Visalia, performing
the Arts," on Novemb
November 20 at the
information, call the

October 20: Visalia Rescue Mission's Annual Banquet, 6-8pm
Join us at the Gate Way Church in Visalia for an exciting time of restoration stories and Mission-wide updates. We'll be debuting new videos, testimonies, and the Fall issue of HopeNOW. Your included dinner never tasted so good. Tickets: $30 • Table of 8: $210 www.vrmhope.org/events/banquet-2015

October 21: Poreterville CHAP "Opening the Bible in the 21st Century: Why It Matters for All of Us" 11:30am-12:30pm
Presented by Ann Marie Wagstaff Ph.D., Language Arts Professor

How did the 20th century study of the Bible as Literature open new pathways to appreciation and interpretation of the Bible? And where might those pathways lead us in the 21st century?

October 21: Links For Life Pink Passion Picnic, 11:30am-1:30pm
Featuring keynote speaker Jody Jo Mize, at the Hanford Civic Auditorium. Tickets $20, not sold at the door. For more information call 707-2368.

October 21: Alzheimer's Workshop entitled "Early Brain Aging or Dementia?" 2-3pm

At Quail Park Retirement Village. Learn what normal brain aging is all about and how dementia is different. This workshop is free and open to the community. Guest speaker is Marie Espinola, Executive Director of the Alzheimer's Foundation of Central California. For additional information or to RSVP, call 624-3503. Quail Park is located at 4520 W. Cypress Avenue, Visalia.

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band on the scene in
October 17 at "Taste
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Lunch Box. For more
school at 627-9500.

October 21: Wellness & You, 5:30-6:30pm
Kaweah Delta Health Care District hosts a free seminar on "Back Pain Versus Leg Pain," at the Dinuba Therapy Specialists, 355 Monte Vista, Suite C., Dinuba. The speaker for this event will be Frank Feng, D.O., a local orthopedic surgeon. Information: 595-7630. Kaweah Delta Health Care District also hosts a free seminar on "Heart Valve Disease and Treatment" on Wednesday, Oct. 21, from 5:30-6:30 p.m. at Claude Meitzenheimer Community Center, 830 Blackstone St., Tulare. The featured speaker will be Dr. Leheb Araim, M.D., a local cardiac and thoracic surgeon. Information: 624-5985.

October 21: COS CHAP Presents Authentic Shakespeare and Freedom of Expression, 6:30-9:30pm
The College of the Sequoias' Cultural Historical Awareness Program (CHAP) presents Professors Joseph Teller and Chris Mangels discussing Authentic Shakespeare and Freedom of Expression on the COS Visalia campus, inside the Ponderosa Building theater. The event is free and open to the public. The evening will include a screening of "Hamlet" (2000), directed by Michael Almereyda and starring Ethan Hawke, Bill Murray, and Julia Styles. Professors Teller and Mangels will consider Shakespeare and the history of adaptations of his work. The discussion will then focus on Almereyda's interpretation of Shakepeare's Hamlet, an example of an expansive rearrangement of the bard's most famous play, challenging audience notions of "authentic Shakespeare."

October 22: Labor Law Compliance Series, 7-10am.
The Visalia Chamber of Commerce, in cooperation with Pacific Employers, will present the state-mandated Supervisors' Sexual Harassment Prevention Training Seminar & Workshop at the Lamp Liter Inn. Registration & Breakfast 7:30-8 am; Seminar 8-10am. Reservations required. For more information call the Chamber, 734-5876.

October 22: Ribbon Cutting, 11am
At the Exeter Library, 230 East Chestnut, Friends of the Library will be celebrating their Ribbon Cutting as new members of the Exeter Chamber of Commerce. Everyone is invited! Light snacks will be served for those who gather to help us celebrate.

October 23: ABLE Industries Awards Dinner/Dance, 6-9pm
The awards ceremony at the Elks Lodge in Visalia will recognize clients' achievements as well as community supporters, staff and business partners. The awards ceremony will be followed by a dance with music provided by Randy Hendrix of HITZ 104.9 FM. Tickets for this event are PRE-SALE ONLY and will NOT be sold at the door. Tickets must be purchased by FRIDAY OCTOBER 9th in order to attend. Tickets are only $10.00 per person. Tickets will include a pulled-pork dinner and are available at Able Industries by calling 651-8150. Able Industries is also seeking sponsors for this event. If your business is interested in a tax-deductible sponsorship please contact Able Industries.

October 24: The 36th Annual "Harvest of Handwovens"
Presented by Handweavers of the Valley will be held Saturday, October 24th at the Exeter Memorial Building, 324 N. Kaweah Ave. on Highway 65 in Exeter. Admission is free, open from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Watch demonstrations of spinning, weaving, felting, bead weaving, fiber preparation, color-blending techniques and dyeing of fibers and yarns. Exquisite pine needle baskets and weaving on gourds will also be featured with basket making demonstrations against a backdrop of completed, award-winning work. Call Nikki Crain at 559-561-4048 or go to www.hwotv.org for more information.

October 24: Boutique shopping & Bakery, 10am-2pm
Presented by the Lutheran Women's Missionary League of Grace Lutheran Church, 1111 south Conyer Street in Visalia. Lunch Served at 11:30am. Lunch tickets: Adults $8; Children 10 & under, $3. Tickets will be sold after church services 3 weeks prior, or phone in your reservations to: Carole Sell 623-9588 or Linda Okland 901-8615. Proceeds from this event are donated to local & worldwide charities.

October 24: Harvest Festival, 3-9pm
Located at the International Agri-Center in Tulare, prepare for food and fun for the whole family, including a kids area, live music, boutique shopping, an antique tractor display and much more! Admission is three cans of food to be donated to the Visalia Rescue Mission or $5, and children under six and children in costume are free. Come celebrate the fall season! Learn more about this event at www.internationalagricenter.org/harvestfestival. For more information contact Stephanie Silva Stephanie@farmshow.org 559-688-1030.

October 24: Rocktoberfest, 4-7pm
Central California Gymnastics Institute Rocktoberfest at 9514 W Pershing Avenue in Visalia. Games, Food, Hay rides and costume contest for all ages. No admission fees. Tickets will be sold at event for food and games. For more information call 651-2244.

October 25: A Peddler's Market, 10am-6pm
Start your holiday shopping at "A Peddler's Market" at the Visalia Elk's Lodge, 3100 W Main St. You'll find Homemade Arts, Crafts, Gifts, Paintings, Soaps, Children's Items and much more. We also have peddler's of Vintage and more modern Treasures. Come or stay for lunch and/or dinner. There will be a variety of mobile food vendors on site. Free Guest Admission so bring your whole family!

October 25: Habitat For Humanity Tulare County Wine Pairing Dinner, 5pm
Karl Merten, chef and owner of Cafe 225, is hosting the dinner while Stefanelli Distributing will be providing the wine at Cafe 225, 225 West Main Street in Visalia. Proceeds benefit Habitat for Humanity of Tulare County, and guests must be 21+ to attend. Tickets are &60 and include food and wine. For more information call Habitat at 734-4040.

October 26: College of the Sequoias Great Books Discussion Group, 4-5:30pm
The group meets second and fourth Mondays monthly in the COS campus' Hospital Rock 133 room in front of the Book Store, just SE of Kern. Tonight's topic: Joseph Conrad, The Secret Sharer

October 26: Pizza with a Purpose, 5-9pm
Enjoy a great meal & support a great cause! Every #lastmonday of the month in 2015. The Planing Mill will donate a portion of the evening's revenue to the VRM!

October 27: Water Justice Celebration, 5:30-8pm
The Community Water Center will be hosting its annual Water Justice Celebration, themed "Leaders in the Face of Drought," at the Visalia community art venue "210." We are thrilled to share that Martha Guzman-Aceves, Deputy Legislative Secretary in the Governor's Office, will be joining us to recognize how far we have come toward the goal of securing safe water for all communities. Guests at the event will be treated to delicious Mexican food and music from Mariachi Juvenil Nueva Generación.

October 29: Pro Youth Annual Legacy Dinner, 5pm
A dinner honoring Fred Ruiz will be held at the Visalia Marriott, 300 South Court Street.

October 30: Woodlake FFA Alumni Social, 4:30-6pm
At the Woodlake Veterans Memorial Building, located at 355 North Acacia St. in Woodlake, all Woodlake FFA Alumni and current FFA members are welcome. We will be serving refreshments and encourage all alumni to wear their FFA jacket/uniform as well as bring any FFA awards or photos from their FFA experiences. We are hosting this social to celebrate 75 years of Woodlake FFA traditions and to connect our history to our present. We will be recognizing some of our chapter's accomplishments over the years and discussing some of the new traditions that have been set forth, such as our Academy of Sustainable Agriculture.

October 30: Hands in the Community Annual Dinner and Silent Auction, 7-9pm
A wine tasting and viewing of auction Items prior to dinner at the Visalia Convention Center. Tickets are $65.00 per person. For more information, contact Lester Moon at 559-625-3822.

NOVEMBER

November 6: Central Valley Parkinson's Support Group Meeting, 10:30am
Central Valley Parkinson's Support Group will meet in the Pre School Center of Visalia United Methodist Church located at 5200 West Caldwell in Visalia. Nicole Burnham from the D.A.'s Office will present a program on "Fraud and Seniors" Plan to join us for lunch and good conversation after the meeting: www.cvpsg.net or cvparkinsons@gmail.com or 559-280-0301

November 6: Porterville CHAP A Panel of Local Vietnam Veterans 7-8pm
This year marks the 40th anniversary of the official end of the Vietnam War. To commemorate that historic event, a panel of local Vietnam Veterans will discuss some of their personal experiences and recollections regarding their time in the service and how that service affected their lives.

Sports

CVC Girls' Cross Country: A Team Effort

Stefan Barros

The Central Valley Christian High Girls cross country team has maintained a high level of success during the past few years. One of the main reasons behind that has been something that Coach Scott Kostelyk has imparted on his team.

Jessica Grimmius

"We try to make this a team thing," he said. "We want them to do well for the good of the group. Another thing I want is for them to eat the right things and get a good night sleep. When you practice early in the morning like we do, we want them at their best."

Jenna Wilson

One of the top runners for Kostelyk and the Cavaliers is sophomore Jenna Wilson.

"We don't look at it as trying to beat one another, we're just trying to go out there and run for each other and do it for the team," she said. "We just want everyone to do well, though it is nice running with other people who have the same skill set that I do."

Junior Shanni Slabber elaborated on Wilson's point about running as whole, and not running as individuals. "We just go into this wanting to work hard for one another and do well as a team," she said.

Another CVC junior runner is Gabby Satterlee, who talked about what may be the biggest strength of the team, which includes selflessness.

Gabby Satterlee

"We are strong mentally," she said. "We know why we are running. We know our purpose out there. We know it's not just about ourselves, and we run with a purpose."

Satterlee also elaborated on the fact that the team practices at 6am, and how that doesn't really faze their group.

"We're already out there," she said. "So, why not give our best when we practice? It's also great being out there with your friends, so that makes it easier."

For any group in any sport that has success, there usually is a time where there was some adversity. A time when things maybe were going in the right direction. Wilson spoke about a time for her personally, when a meet didn't go so well for her and came out better because of it.

Shanni Slabber

Jayden Wilson

"We were going into a meet in Dinuba, and I didn't really take it seriously and I didn't do well," she said. "Afterwards, I was mad at myself, and the next day at practice I ran harder than at the race. I just decided to lay it all out there for every race from that point forward."

For a small school like CVC, it can be tough to move up and run against bigger schools, but that has happened for the Cavaliers due to their performance, and it was then that they believed there was something special with the group of runners.

"When we got the move to Division 4, I just wanted to come out and run, it was a huge motivation for us," said Wilson.

Going forward, complacency does not appear to be an issue for the Cavaliers.

As Slabber explained, "We are pretty well motivated. We see the bigger picture, and we know if we keep a better mindset, and keep positive we can get through anything."

Holiday Craft Boutique

Saturday, November 7
8 am–3 pm

Thirty independent crafters will present a one-day event you will not want to miss! This is a great way to begin your holiday season to find unique items to use in your own home over the holiday season or to purchase gifts for those on your list.

5718 W. Laura Ct., Visalia

For more information: 635-2531 or 679-5706

BELL GAME TICKETS

GAME ON FRIDAY, NOV. 6

Reserved Section Tickets &
General Admission Pre-Sale Tickets

On Sale Starting Monday, Nov. 2

at Bob Mathias Stadium West Ticket Booth
(Reserved Seats WILL NOT be Sold at the District Office)

Ticket Booth Hours

Mon. Nov. 2	12-6 pm
Tues. Nov. 3	12-6 pm
Wed. Nov. 4	12-6 pm
Thurs. Nov. 5	9 am-1 pm
Fri. Nov. 6	9 am-1 pm

GATES WILL OPEN AT 5 PM
GAME STARTS AT 6:30 PM

There will be a LIMITED number of tickets available for sale at the game on a first come, first served basis.

MINI-BELL GAME THURSDAY, NOV. 5
Freshmen game at 5:15 pm, JV game at 7:30 pm
Admission will be charged

Getting Back to COS Football

Stefan Barros

This year, the College of the Sequoias Giants football team started off red-hot, going 4-0 and being one of the top Junior College teams in Northern California. Then on Saturday, October 3, the team suffered a 44-0 loss at the hands of Santa Rosa Junior College.

COS Head Coach Irv Pankey doesn't see this loss as defining his team in any way.

Coach Irv Pankey

"I know we didn't play our best football out there that day, but we start league here after the bye week. As far as I'm concerned the season is just starting and we're 0-0," he said.

The overarching theme for the Giants during their first four wins was teamwork, according to Pankey.

"In the first four games we played together as a team, last game we had breakdowns all over," he said. "The players just need to be able to pull each other up by the bootstraps and get back to what we do well.

"It was a matter of what we did that day. That day we didn't play our best football. Everybody was trying to make plays that they couldn't and it cost them."

Through the first four games, it was the Giant defense that sparked the team, giving up on average only 18 points a game. Defensive Coordinator Joe D'Agostino talked about how the defense can get back on track going forward for the rest of the regular season.

"We just played poorly," D'Agostino said. "We didn't play as a team on offense and defense, and just had breakdowns. The defense was trying to do too much and didn't have the best focus and it just got away from us. We just need to play sound assignment football and we'll be okay."

With the success of the defense in the first four games, D'Agostino addressed what he felt about them coming into league play.

"Coming out of summer we knew we had some potential," D'Agostino said. "Coach Pankey made some changes to get us going in the right direction. We did well in recruiting and helped us get going in the right direction."

Even after the loss to Santa Rosa, Pankey is not going to panic and is still confident in his team's abilities the rest of the season.

"We'll be fine," he said. "We'll get back to COS Giants football, and we'll get everyone back healthy."

The Giants begin conference play on Saturday, October 17, away at Modesto Junior College at 6pm. The Giants will return to the Mineral King Bowl to play San Joaquin Delta on Saturday, October 24 at 7pm.

Folk Singer Grammer to Perform at Center for Spiritual Living Visalia

Staff Reports

Folk singer Tracy Grammer, who rose to fame as half of the folk duo Dave Carter and Tracy Grammer, will perform at the Center for Spiritual Living Visalia at 7pm on Saturday, October 17.

The duo released three folk chart-topping albums featuring Carter's songs from 1998-2001 and toured with folk legend Joan Baez, who called his lyrics "a kind of genius" and her a "brilliant artist."

After Carter died of a heart attack at age 49, Grammer continued to tour, writing some of her own songs and releasing solo albums as well as selections from the Carter-Grammer archives.

In 2012 she released a new Carter-Grammer album "Little Blue Eggs" that included 10 Carter compositions that he had recorded a decade earlier. Grammer found the tapes and finished the songs herself.

In September, Judy Collins released her new duet album "Strangers Again" which features Collins and Willie Nelson singing "When I Go," one of the early hits by Carter and Grammer.

The Visalia concert is made possible because of local songwriter Rebb Firman, who met Grammer 15 years ago at the Sierra Songwriting Festival and has kept in touch. When Firman saw that Grammer was performing in California, he invited her to make a Visalia appearance. She also has a brother in Three Rivers.

"I saw her in Oregon last weekend at the Sisters Folk Festival," said Firman, "and she was wonderful. She continues to sing Dave Carter's songs and also writes her own songs. She also plays guitar and violin."

Folk singer Tracy Grammer

Tickets are $15 and available at tracygrammervisalia.brownpapertickets.com or at the door.

Grammer will also sing at the worship service at the Center for Spiritual Living the following morning at 10:30am. Everyone is welcome.

The Center for Spiritual Living is located at 117 S. Locust, one block south of Main Street. For information, call the center at (559) 625-2441.

Handwoven

Continued from p. 17

is "to try to preserve the ancient arts of weaving and spinning."

"We want people to know what we do," she said.

The non-profit club's membership is generally from the South Valley, but has active members from Springville to Squaw Valley.

Meetings are the second Saturday morning of each month at the Exeter Memorial Building.

Each meeting features a speaker or demonstration. Members have a show and tell, and refreshments are served.

Ann Belau offered spinning demonstrations at last year's show. Many spinning and weaving demonstrations will be presented during this year's show as well. Photo by Nikki Crain.

Advice is always available from fellow members regarding techniques in various types of weaving and spinning.

The Harvest of Handwovens will be held from 10am-3pm and is free. Refreshments will be available.

The Exeter Memorial Building is located at 324 N. Kaweah Dr.

For more information visit the club's website at www.hwotv.org or call Crain at (559) 561-4048.

Clay Cafe Holds Grand Opening

Adina Escarsega

Visalia's Clay Café has held its new "grand opening" recently at its new location at 1018 E. Mineral King. On the First Friday we celebrated our new location, Date Night and Art Walk. The Visalia trolley was routed to the Clay Cafe for the Art Walk, which encouraged many people to take part in the art tour who might never have been made aware of this amazing feature in Visalia. In turn, Art Walk participants learned about Clay Café ceramic studio. It was a "win-win." Some families braved the crowd and painted ceramics.

All week-end the positive feedback was deeply appreciated after three months of very careful planning and hard work to the move. We wanted the new Clay Café location to be a tranquil retreat for all ages and we believe this has been accomplished in our new setting. We are now in a gorgeous 1911 Queen Anne Victorian House that just screams ambiance.

Clay Café can now boast a more compartmentalized studio, where groups can feel more comfortable. After some Google search, we have come to realize we are the only studio of our kind in the US. A lot of thought went into set up and after our three-day grand-opening celebration, we can see it works and flows well. Outside seating is the real bonus and a real treat. On pretty days, even rainy ones, porch seating is available. If the sun is out, the garden and grass area picnic tables are also a beautiful and relaxing option.

Clay Café will continue with a consistent monthly venue. First Fridays are Date Night and the Art Walk, third Thursdays are Ladies' Night, and fourth Saturdays are Children's Story Hour. Kidz Kamps will continue during school breaks. Our first camp will be BLACK FRIDAY in November. For more information please visit www.claycafevisalia.com or call (559) 733-2022.

Main

Continued from p. 17

and on November 15 in Visalia. Mr. Pouliot, top prize winner in the Dorothy DeLay Competition, recently performed Tchaikovsky's stirring Violin Concerto in D Major at Disney Hall under the direction of the legendary Sir Neville Marinner. Blake's rich, soaring tone and his preference for big, emotional music consistently brings audiences to their feet.

February 20, the South Korean virtuoso Jinjoo Cho will perform in Three Rivers only. In June of this year, Ms. Cho took first place in the fabled Indianapolis Violin Competition. When Ms. Cho comes to perform here she will bring with her one of the most famous violins anywhere, Joseph Gingold's 1683 Stradivarius. From the first note to the last, even an untrained ear will recognize the violin's pure silvery tonality and its amazing power to project the subtlest sound to the back of the hall.

Itzhak Perlman enters the scene with the third virtuoso violinist, Francesca dePascuale. Ms. dePascuale has been Mr. Perlman's primary assistant at Juilliard for the past four years, and in April 2014, at Itzhak Perlman's urging, was awarded the Leonore Annenberg Career Grant. Perlman says of Francesca: "An absolutely beautiful violinist, her originality of style is unusual; never glitzy, pretentious, or superficial."

Then in mid-May, the internationally renowned Calidore String Quartet will come to Tulare County for a full week in a working Artist Residency. During that time, Calidore will present two concerts (one in Three Rivers, one in Visalia), will visit local music programs throughout the area, and will present a special program in Sequoia National Park. Calidore's signature style--technically brilliant and at the same time spontaneous--has taken them to prestigious Wigmore Hall in London and has landed them on the roster at Lincoln Center in New York City.

All concerts are held at the acoustically excellent Main Street Theater at 307 E. Main Street in Visalia.

For more information, please go to www.threeriversperformingarts.org.

Wednesday, October 21
5:30-6:30 PM

Claude Meitzenheimer Community Center
830 Blackstone St., Tulare

Speakers:
Leheb H. Araim, MD
Golden State Cardiac & Thoracic Surgery

No registration required.
For information please call (559) 624-2463

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Power of Purple Life Coaching Comes to Hanford

Catherine Doe

Hanford has a life coach, who may help with many of life's ills without the use of pills. Jennifer Thompson, a San Diego native, made the move to Hanford seven years ago, but was no stranger to the Central Valley. Her mother, Nadine Bettencourt-Cardosa, was from a Hanford farming family, having lived here since the early 1900's.

Thompson attended Bennett Stellar University, where she graduated as a Life Transformation Coach. The classes are designed so that the individual can reach their highest potential and then give those skills to their clients."Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all," according to the founder of Bennett Stellar University.

Her course study included neuro-linguistic life coaching, also known as NLP. She also learned clinical hypnotherapy, mastery hypnosis, trauma release therapy and dream sculpting.

The following is a synopsis of what Thompson offers to her clients:

NLP is a left way of reading the right side of the brain and looking at eye movements in order to access the different files of the brain. This technique also constructs images, or remembered images and feelings based on senses through eye movements, with the goal of retraining the brain. The goal is to not act on negative thoughts and to replace negative thoughts with a positive emotion.

Clinical hypnotherapy allows the therapist to communicate and give suggestions to the unconscious mind during a deep relaxation. With hypnotherapy you can access all memories that are clearly stored chronologically on the brain's hard drive, including the ones that cannot be remembered consciously.

Trauma release therapy allows the client to experience a trauma for a brief moment. Rewinding the event in the mind's eye may take the power out of the emotions felt during the trauma. The result is that the event becomes blurry, and negative emotions may completely disappear.

Dream sculpting is a technique utilizing a vision board and symbols that help one continue striving for their goals.

Using all these techniques, Thompson may give her clients the extra push they need to get started or to complete a project. Her techniques can also help them stay on track to fulfill their life goals or help with public speaking. She may help clients make healthy lifestyle changes such as staying on diets, quitting smoking or conquering addictions. Her life coaching skills can help clients in their personal lives by showing them how to maintain stable relationships, conquer fears and alleviate depression.

The following is Thompson's description of her new Power of Purple Life Coaching services.

Jennifer performing NLP on one of her clients.

"My practice is spiritually and holistically based. Personally I follow a vegan diet to counteract my kidney disease so that I do not have to be on dialysis. I use an alternative way of living and looking at illness that can help you too, with whatever illness or chronic issue you are currently facing.

What a life coach can do in less than four-five sessions, a psychoanalyst might not be able to do in six months. I have helped my clients stop smoking and eat healthier which lead to automatic weight loss.

Are you afraid of flying? Does the idea of bugs bug you? Timeline regression can cure Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and many other disorders. Timeline regression gets to the root of the issue. It has you go back in time where you were first affected by the trauma and deal with unsettled issues that are holding you back from moving forward.

I also use Reiki to align your chakras. Reiki has the potential to lessen the symptoms of such illnesses as Fibromyalgia and internal pain. Reiki rids the body of old energy that blocks your body from its natural flow. Your body will feel energized and lighter. This procedure also reduces pain and headaches as the negative energy leaves your energy channels known as chakras.

Have you tried going to your local medical doctor, psychologist, psychiatrist, or family counselor with no success? For my life coaching to work, you must truly believe in yourself and NLP and the hypnotic process and know that this can change your life. Hypnosis can change the way you look at your own health and life style. If it is your mind that is making you sick, then it is your mind that can make you un-sick. You are in control! This is not for everyone. But it can work for those who want to change their world for the positive.

I urge anyone to come see me who wants relief from addiction, depression, anxiety or anything else that might be holding you back from achieving your dreams.

Thompson is available for a free consultation. Appointments are held at the Cosmic Corral, 209 N. Irwin St. Hanford. For an appointment, call (559) 380-8887, or via e-mail, jennpowerofpurplelifecoaching@gmail.com

Valley Voice

A Weekend Away

A dusting of snow covers the surrounding mountains while golden aspens show off their beautiful autumn hues at Virginia Lake near the city of Lee Vining in Mono County. The Eastern Sierra offers a range of fall colors from September through December, drawing eager visitors to the area.
Photo by Mike Baird, flickr.com/photos/mikebaird

Eastern Sierra Visit Offers Spectacular Fall Colors

Dave Adalian

Each year when California's endless summer finally passes into autumn, Mother Nature cloaks herself in breathtaking colors of fire. In the Sierra, among the rows of towering pines, grow black oaks, cottonwoods and aspens, willows and the occasional elm, their reds, yellows and oranges blazing among the evergreens as winter nears.

The transformation starts subtly in mid-September, as the first hues of gold appear in green canopies turned dark by the long heat of summer. By October and November, the metamorphosis is reaching its peak, inviting all who would see to come for the show.

Go East!

The fall color of the Eastern Sierra in the Owens Valley and Mono Lake areas is unrivaled in its ostentation. Though the two areas are linked by Highway 395, they offer sharp contrast. In the dry area around Owens Valley, the parched landscape of scrub and sage gives way to stretches of slender trees as visitors leave the main road to climb west into the Sierra National Forest. In the wetter area north near Mono Lake, groves of gold and red stand framed by the rising granite mountains and march around the alpine lakes.

Exploring Owens Valley

Travelers taking the southern approach will reach the city of Big Pine first, where Glacier Lodge Road climbs from the valley floor up the Big Pine Canyon. As the road moves from 4,000 feet at the valley floor to 8,000 feet at its end, the colorful autumn display reveals itself in fits and starts. Stands of willow and aspen line the banks of Big Pine Creek and climb the canyon walls. Those who take to the trails at road's end will find views of Palisade Glacier, the southernmost glacier in North America.

A few miles north of Big Pine sits Bishop, the largest town in the Owens Valley and the gateway to Bishop Creek. A 20-minute drive up Highway 168 leads visitors to a hidden lake area surrounded by sheer mountains climbing to over 13,000 feet. Along the way is the aptly named Aspendell, a low area lined with color and surrounded by hills. At the end of the road are a trio of lakes, the largest of which is Lake Sabrina. Hikers who take the trail around Lake Sabrina will find themselves walking among fields of golden trees that extend into the

SIERRA continued on **II »**

A Trip to Meet the Animals

Nancy Vigran

In 1967, Paul Simon wrote, "It's all happening at the zoo." And nearly 50 years later, there is a whole lot happening at many California zoos and animal sanctuaries close enough for a day trip or a zoo-destination weekend get-a-way.

One very unique one can be found just about an hour south of Tulare and Kings Counties. The California Living Museum (CALM) was the dream of one very special Bakersfield teacher, said Zoo Manager Lana Fain.

"This is really different than most of the zoos you will find," she said.

The 32-year-old zoo houses only species of animals native to California, and the flora and fauna are all only native California species as well.

"You won't find giraffes, elephants or primates here," she said, "but you will find mountain lions, bears and San Joaquin kit foxes."

Upon entering the 14-acre zoo, the public is welcomed by the zoo's porcupines, Pebbles and BamBam. There are a lot of "favorites" including black bears, Louie and Cinnamon, and the mountain lions.

BamBam greets visitors as they enter the California Living Museum. Courtesy/CALM

"You ask five different people (what is their favorite) and you'll get five different answers," she said.

Exhibits include a butterfly and hummingbird garden, bighorn sheep, desert habitat, Cats of California, raptors and a reptile house. The gardens include a Trees of California exhibit. The Children's Park also has a petting zoo.

The zoo is a non-profit and falls under the jurisdiction of the Kern County Superintendent of Schools.

CALM just may be the only zoo that is managed for a department of schools, Fain said.

CALM is located at 10500 Alfred Harrell Highway in Bakersfield and is open 9am-4pm daily, although closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day.

For more information visit the CALM website at calmzoo.org or call, (661) 872-2256.

Cat Haven

Recently threatened by the Rough Fire, the cats of Project Survival Cat Haven in Dunlap have returned safely to their home.

The haven is home to lions, tigers, jaguars, cheetah, Pallas cat, jaguarondi, servals, bobcats, leopards, snow leopards, and Siberian and Canadian lynx.

The focus of Cat Haven is "to educate people about the plight of endangered cat species, and to raise funds for the conservation projects in the wild." There is also a large devotion to general wild cat education here, with a connection to cat protection and conservancy around the world.

Cat Haven is not a traditional zoo. It, too, is the dream of one man. Founder Dale Anderson's desire was to pull together a haven that would combine many facets, aiming mostly at helping with conservation efforts for cats around the world, but also including breeding endangered species and education for the public.

"The Cat Haven is designed to act as 'base camp' in the belief that preserving wild cats in their native habitat is the principle justification for maintaining

ZOOS continued on **III »**

Snowshoeing, Cross Country Skiing, in Local Parks

Nancy Vigran

When a white blanket of snow covers the Sierra Nevada, it opens up the region for a different look at the environment, one that can be found through classic cross country skiing or snow shoeing.

Within Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, many walking and hiking trails take on a different feel with winter and transform into skiing or shoeing trails on the snow. Trails that may be used for these winter modes of transport are well marked with yellow signs. A map of all cross country ski trails is available at visitor centers and stores within the park.

"The beauty of the red bark of the trees against the white snow is breathtaking," said Dana Dierkes, public affairs specialist for Sequoia and Kings Canyon.

While it may feel awkward initially, "if you can walk, you can use snowshoes," she said. However, it is a bit more tenuous for small children.

Cross country skiing can prove a little more difficult for some, but can be easily learned.

"It can be kind of tricky at first," said Daniel Blankenship, park ranger. "But once you develop a rhythm and pace, it is the equivalent of going for a walk."

In classic cross country, the skier moves skis parallel to each other with a "kick and glide" motion. While it is best on groomed cross country trails (where two tracks are made by grooming machines in the snow for you to follow), it can be done under different conditions, but again, only on designated trails within the national parks.

Care must be given to follow trails that permit either activity, as to not harm the natural landscape.

Snowshoe ranger-lead tours are available on held on Saturdays and some holidays during the winter dependent upon weather and staffing availability. These tours are generally about one mile and take about two hours. The past few years have not leant weather conditions for these specific tours, but other ranger walks have been available instead. The hope, of course, is for this winter to being a lot of snow.

In general, the snowshoe tours are not too strenuous, Blankenship said. For any given tour, an assessment is made of the group as to its interest and ability, before the direction of the tour is made. Snowshoes for the tour are available on a first-come basis for ranger-lead tours.

A bit more strenuous adventure is offered through the Off the Beaten Path Snowshoe tour lead by naturalists from the Sequoia Natural History Association. Dates and times are determined by

PARKS continued on **III »**

Sierra

Continued from p. I

rough high country surrounding them.

Five lakes in the area, as well as Bishop Creek, offer plenty of opportunities for the fisherman, and rock climbers are also drawn to the nearby Buttermilk Country, where the fall foliage stands among huge boulders and rock formations, streams and hiking trails.

Transition Zone

North of Round Valley, the character of the land changes as Highway 395 turns northwest and heads into the Mammoth Lakes area. Here is one of the more popular spots for fall color seekers, Rock Creek Canyon in southern Mono County.

A nine-mile drive along Rock Creek Road takes visitors to Rock Creek Lake and the Little Lakes Valley by way of a tree-lined canyon carved from the surrounding mountains by a long disappeared glacier. The spot is a particular favorite with hikers, who can move from lake to lake along the Little Lakes Valley Trail.

Farther up the road a bit, south of Lake Crowley, is McGee Creek Canyon. McGee Creek Road is lined with groves of aspen, and it ends at the trailhead for the hike to Beaver Pond, a trek that follows the winding creek through the trees.

Head north again to find Convict Lake Road, which follows Convict Creek to the lake. The easy drive is popular with families, and the trail around the lake offers easy hiking.

Crossing Yosemite

The Mono Lakes region, while connected by Highway 395 to Owens Valley in the south, is perhaps best reached by sightseers by taking Highway 120 through Yosemite Valley, though that road is closed after the first snowfall each season. Visitors coming in along that route will find their first view of the autumn colors as they enter Lee Vining Canyon at the eastern end of the Tioga Pass, the autumn show lining the highway and wandering the surrounding hillsides.

Fall displays are plentiful both north and south of the junction between 120 and 395. At the northern end of Mono Lake is Highway 167, and a turn to the west leads to a quick drive to Lundy Lake, one of the area's most popular fall destinations. Amid the aspen groves is a trailhead that leads above nearby Mill Creek through a series of lakes to picturesque Lundy Falls. At the end of the 2-mile trail is a series of cascading falls, surrounded by aspens that walk down from the hills to the water's edge.

Turning north again on Highway 395, visitors will find Conway Summit. While the mountain itself is covered in changing foliage, the roadside pull-out offers a spectacular overview of Mono Lake to the south. In the same area is the westward winding Virginia Lakes Road, which follows tree-lined Virginia Creek to the Virginia Lakes Basic. There, hikers can visit eight lakes in just over two miles of walking through trees and beneath the striking surrounding mountain vistas. The trails here also connect to Green Creek to the north, another area known for its fall colors.

Making the Loops

To the south of Mono Lake are perhaps the two best areas for seeing fall foliage in all its glory. Just a few miles south of Lee Vining is the June Lake Loop. Entered from the north, Highway 158 carries motorists past Grant Lake, Silver Lake, Gull Lake before coming to the community of June Lake and the body of water for which it's named. The drive is spectacular at any time of the year, but is a must-see during the fall. The area offers hiking for all ability ranges, with easy hiking on the Gull Lake Trail, a moderate walk on the Rush Creek Trail or the more strenuous trek to nearby Parker Lake in the Ansel Adams Wilderness.

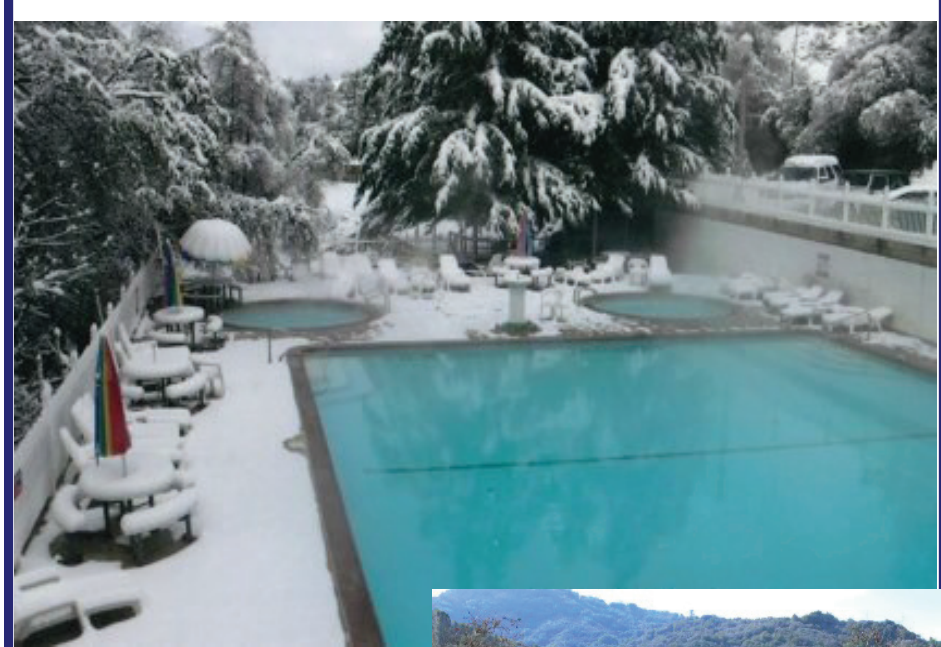
Morning light streams across 13,000-foot Mt. Emerson in the Inyo National Forest in this photo taken at North Lake, west of Bishop near Aspendell in Bishop Canyon, while aspens show off their reds and golds in the foreground. The Eastern Sierra offers a range of fall colors from September through December, drawing eager visitors to the area. Photo by Pacheco, flickr.com/photos/pachecophotography

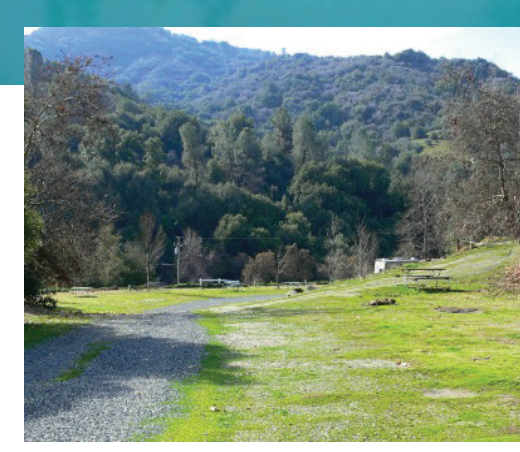
Further south is the Mammoth Lakes area, which overflows with color each autumn. The town of Mammoth Lakes is surrounded, as the name implies, by a series of alpine lakes known for their fishing and hiking. To get there, take the Highway 203 (Main Street) west just a couple of miles to the secluded ski resort area.

Following Main to Lake Mary Road will carry you to the Mammoth Lakes Basin, where a series of five lakes surrounded by quick climbing mountains will seem afire with fall colors. The area offers great fishing and is riddled with trails for the day-hiker that rise into the surrounding Sierra. Alternatively, take 203 north to reach the Mammoth Scenic Loop, a drive through pine forests dotted with occasional fall color and views of the Sierra.

For more information about Owens Valley, contact the Bishop Chamber of Commerce at (760) 873-8405. For information on Mammoth and the Mono Lake area, contact the Mono County Tourism and Film Commission at (800) 845-7922.

California Hot Springs
Resort & RV Park





Full RV hook-ups with water, sewer & electric. Tent campers welcome with restrooms & natural hot spring-fed water for showers.

Full service deli for breakfast and lunch with indoor dining area.

Located on privately-owned property surrounded by the Sequoia National Forest at approximately 3.150' elevation.

Fall hours - 9-4 weekdays; 9-5 weekends

We will be closed Nov. 26; Dec. 16-26; Jan. 1

(661) 548-6582 www.cahotsprings.com

Zoos

Continued from p. I

them in captivity," according to the haven's website.

Survival Cat Haven is located at 38257 E. Kings Canyon Rd. in Dunlap. Winter hours here are 10am-4pm daily, although closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day.

For more information visit cathaven.com or call (559) 338-3216.

Draco, a Great Horned Owl. Courtesy/CALM

Fresno Chaffee Zoo

Fresno is the home to the Fresno Chaffee Zoo. Here you will find giraffe and elephants, and a brand new exhibit.

The African Adventure is scheduled to open October 15. This 18-acre exhibit features multi-species exhibits with animals who would roam together in their native plains and savannahs and will be home to some new species for the zoo including African elephants, lions, Southern white rhinoceros, wildebeest and more. The area will also feature a new giraffe feeding station and a cheetah run.

Another unique exhibit at this zoo is Sea Lion Cove, modeled after Point Lobos, California, with sea lions, harbor seals and brown pelicans. Sea Lion Cove is touted to be one of the most unique and beautiful sea lion exhibits in the country.

Other exhibits include the Australian bird aviary, Tropical Treasures (rainforest exhibit) and Wolf Woods.

The Fresno Chaffee Zoo is also open daily from 9am-4pm weekdays and 9am-6pm on weekends. The zoo is open modified hours on Thanksgiving and is closed Christmas day.

The Fresno Chaffee Zoo is located in Fresno's Roeding Park, just east of Hwy 99, between Belmont and Olive Avenues. For more information, visit the zoo website at fresnochaffeezoo.org or call (559) 498-5910.

Lodi's Micke Grove Park Zoo

There are several other zoological parks to visit and go play within neighboring areas. The Micke Grove Park Zoo is located in Lodi. The 5-acre zoo and surrounding park were a gift to the people of San Joaquin County from local philanthropists William and Julia Harrison Micke.

This zoo emphasis uniqueness and quality versus quantity and size with special emphasis to endangered species through the Association of Zoos and Aquariums Species Survival Plans. In recent years, the Micke Grove Park Zoo has successfully bred golden-lion tamarins (native to Brazil), Chilean pudu and Waldrapp ibis (native to Morocco), all seriously threatened or endangered species. It works closely with many conservation partners, worldwide.

On exhibit here are lemurs, tamarins and spider monkeys, snow leopards, parrots, birds of prey and a variety of reptiles including turtles, geckos and iguana.

Also located within the park are a Japanese Garden, San Joaquin County Historical Museum and Fun Town at Micke Grove Amusement Park.

Micke Grove Park Zoo is open from 10am-5pm daily except for Christmas Day, when it is closed. It is located at 11793 N. Micke Grove Rd. in Lodi. For more information, visit mgzoo.com, or call (209) 331-2010.

Other Zoos to Visit

Other zoos to visit within a weekend's visit of Tulare and Kings Counties include:

Charles Paddock Zoo, 9100 Morro Road, Atascadero – open daily except major holidays.

Happy Hollow Zoo & Park, 1300 Senter Road, San Jose – open daily, although closed weekdays November 16-December 25.

Oakland Zoo, 9777 Golf Links Road, Oakland – open daily except Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Monterey Bay Aquarium, 886 Cannery Row, Monterey – open daily.

Palo Alto Junior Zoo, 1451 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto – open daily except Mondays.

Sacramento Zoo, 3930 West Land Park Drive, Sacramento – open daily except Thanksgiving and Christmas.

San Francisco Zoo, 1 Zoo Road (Sloat Blvd. & the Great Highway), San Francisco – open daily.

Steinhart Aquarium, 55 Music Concourse Drive (Golden Gate Park), San Francisco – open daily except Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Cinnamon, an American Black Bear. Courtesy/CALM

Holiday Lights at CALM

The California Living Museum ushers in the holidays with its Feast for the Beasts, the day after Thanksgiving, Friday, November 27. Food donations may be made in lieu of ticket costs.

The donation list includes three pounds of walnuts or almonds without salt or flavoring, two large bags of frozen blueberries, blackberries or raspberries, or frozen mixed vegetables, two pound jars of peanut butter, honey or jam, or five pounds of fresh raw yams, or apples.

CALM's annual Holiday Light Festival starts that evening and runs through January 2. Some three million lights will fill nine-10 acres of the park to welcome spectators during evening hours from 5:30-9pm daily, except Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Day, said Lana Fain, zoo manager.

The lights do not affect the animals, Fain said, "or we would not do it." In fact, some of the nocturnal animals, such as raccoons, curiously look around the first few evenings, "as if to ask, 'What are you doing?'"

A few of the exhibits are closed during these evenings at the zoo, but other special events take place including a giant merry-go-round.

The zoo's Candy Cane Express will continue providing site-seeing rides into the evenings.

More than 50,000 people are expected to visit CALM during the Holiday Light Festival. Tickets are available at the gate.

Proceeds from this event go directly into further development of habitats and new exhibits.

For more information, visit CALM at www.calmzoo.org.

The winter backdrop for cross-country skiiers and snowshoers. Courtesy/NPS

Parks

Continued from p. I

weather conditions.

In general walking paths lend themselves to the same view, but under different conditions with the snow. Winter visitors may still bird watch, site see and photograph various areas of the parks that they have seen in spring, summer and fall, only with a different backdrop.

Of course, either activity is weather dependent. Under some conditions, such as a light snow or no snow, hiking boots may be more appropriate. When the weather is stormy, tours will be cancelled and either activity may be banned.

Cross country ski and snowshoe rentals are generally available at the Alta Market and Ski Shop at Wuksachi Lodge, and the Grant Grove Gift Shop. A call should be made to check availability.

Skis, boots and poles may also be available at various sporting good shops in the Central Valley. Care should be given in properly sizing, not only boots, but skis and poles as well for each individual. There are different types of cross country skis. Renters should advise the store on where they will be skiing and under what conditions.

To check snow, skiing and snowshoeing conditions, availability of equipment rentals and dates and times of ranger-led snowshoe walks, call the park's main line at (559) 565-3341.

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